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DECEMBER RECORDS AND A FEW REMARKS

By THE EDITOR

THE two outstanding discs last month judged merely from the point of view of recording are the *Soldiers' Chorus* in *Faust* from H.M.V. and a couple of dances by the Russian Balalaika Orchestra from Columbia. Both these are three-shilling records, and no reader of THE GRAMOPHONE can afford to miss either. I have no doubt that most people will consider the Chorus more impressive, but in my opinion the major triumph is really achieved by the orchestra, containing as it does all those mandolin-like instruments that until now have completely baffled recorders, while on one side an attractive Spanish dance displays some astonishing castanet effects.

The orchestral records I enjoyed most last month were the two violin concertos. Of these the Max Bruch played by Sammons and issued by Columbia lends itself quite extraordinarily to the gramophone, and I don't know any more successful attempt to balance the soloist with the orchestra. Moreover, the work itself makes an instant appeal to the

ordinary man's expectation of what the violin is going to do. Here is a case where fibre fans will deliberately deny themselves a rich pleasure, merely because these particular records are not successful with fibre. One greatly esteemed correspondent of mine will know at whom I am hitting with these words. The playing of Albert Sammons is masterly, and I think I am safe in saying that every altitude of brow may safely buy these records as soon as the strain of the Christmas season on the purse is relaxed. Almost equally as good is the Parlophone issue of Mozart's *Concerto in D* with Riele Queling as the violinist. Even those who have already bought the Kreisler records will not waste 13s. 6d. in buying this version as well, and those who have not been able to afford the Kreisler version are advised to buy this one immediately. They will have the double satisfaction not only of possessing three records of entrancing music, but of being able to argue, with a good deal of reason, that they possess the better version of the two.

What shall we say about the Tchaikovsky *Fourth Symphony* from H.M.V.? I know of few more ungrateful tasks than harsh criticism of one of these big orchestral works. But alas, the *Fourth Symphony* is not a success. There seems to me to be something almost deliberately defiant in choosing this particular work for a symphonic debut in the latest methods of recording. I remember reading once that Tchaikovsky suffered when he was conducting from an uncomfortable delusion that his head was falling off, so much so that he used to think he must hold it on with his left hand. Well, if he had listened to these five records, he would have sent out at once for a photographer's rest, a pot of glue, and a solderer. The music itself is a jangle of shattered nerves, and even where there is any attempt to rid the music of the exasperation which sets us on edge the recording steps into the breach and sees that our nerves are not allowed any rest. The Columbia Company, in one of their darkly sibylline allusions to recording developments, speak of a remarkable stereoscopic effect achieved by it. This is at once a singularly happy and unhappy description. Among the perversions of human taste nothing more vile than the stereoscope with its dreadful photographs has ever had a vogue. A merely spatial illusion is worse than useless. Who does not know that landscape of battered wedding-cakes labelled the Bernese Oberland? Who has not shuddered at those paralysed marionettes in the shadow of an elongated band-box, which is labelled Place Vendôme? We must at once dethrone this stereoscopy at the expense of everything else, or this is the sort of review you will presently be getting in THE GRAMOPHONE: "The latest issue of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* is indeed remarkable for its stereoscopic fidelity. The great opening phrase played by the hooters is exactly 22 feet 4 inches north-west of the tooth-combs. Incidentally, we should mention that some of the tissue paper issued to the tooth-combs is not of the quality we have learnt to associate with this recording company. That, however, is a small matter when we remember the accuracy with which the pizzicato on the corrugated iron makes an angle of exactly 45° to the railing-rattlers on the north-east slopes of the orchestra. The famous bridge from the scherzo to the finale which has hitherto eluded all the efforts of the recorders comes off splendidly. Every passing bus is a perfect solid. We are not quite sure that in the Andante the hoops were quite as far away as they ought to have been from the mouth-organs, an extra yard to the left would have made all the difference." Enough! You see the effect on my pen of a stereoscopic Tchaikovsky symphony. Perhaps it is unfair to trip up the recording companies in the mid-way of their jump, and if I do less than justice to the advance in one direction

it is only because I tremble when I find this inclination to suppose that a *merely* stereoscopic effect can possess any value.

I wonder why English composers seem to find it necessary to sign their music, as it were, with a tune they never invented themselves. Gustav Holst, Vaughan Williams, and Delius, all of them, have this habit. I might as well put an ode of Keats in every novel I wrote. It is high time that Mr. Holst gave *Greensleeves* a rest, and equally high time that Dr. Vaughan Williams rested *his* tune, of the name of which I am unfortunately ignorant. Here it is again in the *Old King Cole Suite* issued by Vocalion last month. I feel this music is rather like an academic uncle trying to amuse his nephews—a kind of "eat and drink to-day, for to-morrow I am lecturing again at Oxford." Still, it's pleasant enough to listen to. I have the same feeling about Mr. Frank Bridge's arrangement of *Sir Roger De Coverley* issued by Columbia. It is too confoundingly self-conscious for my taste, or, to use a simile, it is like roast beef in a Soho restaurant.

I have been wondering when we should get the great *Prince Igor* aria on the gramophone, and here it is at last sung by Chaliapine. I did not greatly care for it. I have heard Nadejin sing it a great deal better. I liked Madame Austral's record last month better than any I have heard of hers. Another vocal record which should not be missed is a tenor from Columbia, Mr. W. F. Watt, who sings quite delightfully a couple of old Irish ballads. The sea-shanties by the De Reszke Quartet from H.M.V. are splendid, though I don't understand why it is necessary for the piano to make its appearance in the middle of each side of the record. The Aco shanties by John Thorne and trio are not so good, and I wish they wouldn't pronounce Rio Grande as if they were Portuguese seamen. Mr. Goss was the only shanty man who got this right, or, if you prefer it, rightly wrong. On the other hand, Mr. J. Thorne singing *Summertime on Bredon* and *By the Waters of Babylon* is the best English baritone record I have heard for a long time. Quite charming.

My search for funny records this Christmas has not been a success. About the best of them is a Vocalion record called *The Zoo Keeper*, a humorous duologue by Gene Gerrard and Jack Livesay. Monty (Columbia) was not so funny as usual, and the recording of his newspaper crackling made me think for a time that the motor of the gramophone had gone wrong, which hardly seems a successful effect. The same applies to the snoring which accompanies *The Parson's Christmas Address*. I ascribed this to the motor, perhaps because I was nearly snoring myself. Any writer will tell you that one of the hardest things in literature is to make a bore unmistakably a bore, but nevertheless amusing to people who read about him. Jane Austen achieved

the greatest triumph in this direction with Miss Bates in *Emma*. Mr. Foster has aimed too high; he succeeds in reproducing the bore, but the reproduction of it becomes a bore itself.

I have not time to mention in detail the many admirable choral records which are now coming out in bulk, thanks to recording improvements. Apart from plainsong, and those charming records of the Irmeler Ladies' Choir that Parlophone gives us, I have to confess that a very little chorus goes a very long way with me; but those who like choral work should take the trouble to hear all these new records that are coming out now, for certainly in this respect the latest recording has given us nothing but improvement. I must also confess that I have never listened to a set of glee-singers without having pictured to myself the pleasure of shooting them one after another, either from the gallery of the Coliseum with a rifle, or from the front seats of the smaller concert-halls with a pocket pistol. I am at a loss to explain this bloodthirsty impulse, for the only other living creature I have any desire to kill is the rabbit. Even as I write these words a picture passes before my mind of some fat six-foot alto staggering back shot by me through the heart. I should kill the altos first, then the basses, then the tenors, and perhaps spare the baritones. To leave this macabre subject and return to last month's records I was tremendously impressed by the last Pachmann record from H.M.V., and nobody should miss a really exquisite record from Columbia of the London String Quartet in a movement from Schubert's *Quartet in C minor*. I cannot say that the Flonzaley records from H.M.V. of the Schumann *Quintet* have displaced the Vocalions in my affections, but I suppose a connoisseur would consider them better.

There are several other records this month about which I should like more time to think about before I give an opinion, which would be particularly superficial this month owing partly to our going to press earlier and partly to my own pre-occupation with a book. So this review must be taken as one of hurried impressions rather than careful judgment. Moreover, I have been in a good deal of pain most of the month, and it really is not fair for a critic to judge works unless he is well. I found the Max Bruch concerto from Columbia and the Mozart concerto from Parlophone a great comfort, and this is not testimony to be disregarded. But I will have another go at that Tchaikovsky *Fourth Symphony*.

With regard to the Lifebelt, I have received a quantity of much appreciated letters, one or two of which we print on another page, and my statement that, if the Lifebelt worked at all, it would seem miraculous has been abundantly justified. One reader wrote and told me in one paragraph of his letter that I had no business to laugh at the

eminent quartets of composers who sang pæans of praise of this or that instrument, and in another paragraph said that as Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE I had no business to identify myself with the sale of the Lifebelt, his objection to which seemed to be that it was twopennyworth of rubber sold for five shillings. In the famous libel case brought by Whistler against Ruskin, the painter was asked how long he had taken to paint a picture for which he has asked the sum of £200. Whistler replied that it had taken him a quarter of an hour. "Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Whistler," said counsel for the defence, "that you had the audacity to ask £200 for a quarter of an hour's work?" "I did not ask it for a quarter of an hour's work," said Whistler, "I asked it for the knowledge of a lifetime."

In staking my reputation for honesty on the value of Mr. Griffith's Lifebelt, subject always to certain reservations I was careful to emphasise, I did so because I believed and still believe that many owners of gramophones can by this simple device double their effect. It would have been perfectly easy for me to boost Mr. Griffith's invention in the columns of this paper without letting our readers know that we had anything to do with it, but if somebody to-morrow produces a device more effective than this one, he will find that I am the first person to acknowledge its greater effectiveness and withdraw the Lifebelt from competition immediately.

Now for another matter. You will find in this number a report by our expert committee on the new H.M.V. instrument—a report which may savour of trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. All I can do is to assure you that both opinions represent the sincere convictions of those who gave them. I have no desire to retract or qualify anything I have said about the new H.M.V. instrument, but I am as far as ever from claiming infallibility, and we should not have gone to the trouble we have to collect this committee of experts unless we believed that their judgment was at least as sound as my own and possibly a great deal sounder. I believe, and I think most of you will agree with me, that my job is to preserve my impressionableness. It may be that, even as I sit here writing these words, a new instrument twice as good as the latest H.M.V. is on its way to Jethou. So far as gramophone secrets are concerned, I am in the same position as the ordinary member of the public. I shall not deserve the reproaches of anybody who has bought a new H.M.V. instrument if I discover a new one that is better. From a purist standpoint I may have misdirected a large number of our readers, but my job is to tell people what I think they will like, not necessarily what I think is good for them. I am one of those doctors who prescribe a change of air and plenty of amusement, and if my patients get

better under this regime I shall not alter my prescription.

I have been waiting to give an account of the Jussrite system of storing and cataloguing records, but delays with my new room have prevented my giving it a trial yet. Easy enough to say what I think? No, the only good advice comes from the man who is *using* something himself. At present I am still buying more Astra albums every month. But I may find my salvation in the Jussrite system. Finally, let me make it rather a personal matter with my readers that they should not forget Mr.

Hervey Elwes' *Thoughts on Music*. It is really a thoroughly delightful production from every point of view, and both the compiler and the publishers deserve that their work should gain a little practical appreciation. You will be astonished to read what a number of good things have been written about music, and I must pay a tribute to Mr. Elwes' taste, industry, and devotion.

As I correct these proofs some new Sistine Choir records have arrived from Parlophone, which are glorious.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.



THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

Some Operatic Records of 1925

AT my Editor's request I am interrupting the sequence of my comments upon the Mozart operas, in order to interpolate a few seasonable suggestions regarding the pick of the operatic records issued during the past year. Apart from a natural readiness to obey orders, I comply the more gladly because this proceeding has enabled me to make acquaintance with a good many records that I had not had occasion to listen to before. Either they had come out prior to my quite recent pages on new operatic records, or they had not come within the scope of my regular articles; or, if I have dealt with them already, I can now mention them again in briefer fashion.

1925 was, I think, a wonderful year in the history of the gramophone—wonderful not so much for the mechanical developments and improvements in the instrument itself, though they were extremely important, as for the growth of its utility and popularity, the scope of its functions, and, above all, perhaps, the ever-widening field of its instrumental repertory. The continued progress in the department of orchestral recording naturally had a good effect upon the quality of the vocal accompaniments, which have now reached a far higher level of excellence than ever before; and in this, as in many other respects, the English houses have definitely shown that they have nothing to fear from comparisons with the American and Continental *ateliers*. Wonderful, again, has been the ease with which the gramophone has held its own in the face of the severe competition from other quarters, old and new. The piano-players are doing it no harm; the wireless is positively

helping to magnify its blessings and spread its message. When I was broadcasting last spring from 2 L O for the first time, I think nothing done in the studio struck me more forcibly, as evidence of this, than when the announcer, to fill in time, connected a Grafonola or an H.M.V., I am not sure which, with the microphone and sent out a Kreisler solo to the two or three million listeners who were patiently waiting for my remarks on wireless diction.

There has been a distinct increase in the number and variety of the selections from the better-known operas, and not a few from operas that are anything but familiar to our general public. I wish I could say that they embody an equally satisfactory proportion of good singing; but to state that would, I fear, be indulging in flattery. However, novelty counts for a good deal, especially when it marks a step towards greater completeness. Artists need not be afraid of a lukewarm reception for the many beautiful passages in opera that have been ignored hitherto by record-makers simply because they do not form part of some detached number or piece. There are still plentiful bits of Wagner that are easily separable from their surroundings, not to mention Puccini, the modern French operas, and those Meyerbeer gems to which I have lately been drawing attention. Among the Wagner possibilities one 1925 example is that glorious passage in *Tannhäuser* where Elisabeth intercedes with the outraged Knights for the life of her sinning hero. It comes in the midst of a big finale; but Emmy Bettendorf has done it as a solo (*Elisabeth's Pleading*, Parlophone, E.10219,

with the *Prayer* on the reverse side), and it would be impossible to desire a more sympathetic or touching interpretation. Well sung and well recorded throughout, the concluding phrases are particularly lovely.

It is a good idea, this commingling of the unfamiliar with the hackneyed; so, while I am about it, I will bestow credit upon two other Parlophone efforts, to wit, Zita Fumagalli-Riva's (E.10240) conjunction of *Sul fil d'un soffio etesio* from Verdi's *Falstaff* with *Vissi d'arte*; and Zinaida Jurjevskaja's (E.10278) *O du mir einst Hülfe gab* from Gluck's *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, together with Pamina's air *Ach! ich fühl's*. Each of these has excellent points to recommend it. Fumagalli has a fine voice, replete with tender sentiment, and fairly enhances the charm of the delightful *Falstaff* excerpt; while the fanciful orchestral accompaniment is admirably played. Jurjevskaja's delivery of Gluck's tragic air is full of intense feeling and distinguished by exceptional beauty of voice and style, yet with a rare simplicity and nobility of phrasing. Concerning her air from the *Magic Flute* I will write another time. (Meanwhile a special interest attaches to the records of this gifted young soprano, whose body was reported to be found in the river Reuss near Andermatt in Switzerland on the 6th December last, under conditions that seemed to afford evidence of her having committed suicide. She was a member of the State Opera House in Berlin.) Yet another hit from the same source is Emmy Bettendorf's finished rendering of two selections from the exquisite music of the Marschallin in the first act of the *Rosenkavalier*. The Mirror solo, *Kann mich auch an ein Mädel erinnern* (Parlophone, E.10341) is quietly and sweetly warbled in a *mezza voce* that is very cleverly managed; but even more entrancing is the soliloquy that follows, *Er soll jetzt gehen*, after the departure of Oktavian. That final ending of the scene, when so deliciously sung as this and including the fascinating dreamy passage for the two violins, is one of the most inspired things that Strauss has ever written. It is worth going a long way to hear.

I will glance next at a few of the additions to the H.M.V. catalogue, beginning with Frieda Hempel's "faultless rendering," as I have already termed it, of *Robert, toi que j'aime* (D.B.297), which is here bracketed with the Dell' *Acqua Villanelle*—the latter brilliantly sung with any quantity of additional ornaments and *fiorituri*. Noticed already are Maria Jeritza's *Dio di giustizia* and *Son gente risoluta* (D.A.579) from *Fedora*, both excellent in tone, atmosphere, and recording. Two duets from the first act of *Tosca*, *Chi è quella donna bionda* and *Ora stammi a sentir*, by Gota Ljungberg and Browning Mummery (D.B.752), are given with the necessary brightness and animation. I do not care, though, for the Aïda-Amneris duet (*Fù la sorte* and *Pietà*,

D.B.728), as rendered by Tina Pola-Randacio and Maartje Offers. Regardless of balance, the contralto is too loud throughout, and the singing of both is undeniably rough. In the fine air, *Selva opaca* from *William Tell* (D.B.831), Toti dal Monte imparts much grace to the one verse that she sings, but takes it too slowly and with a curious combination of timbres, clear and well "covered" in the head register, open and "white" in the medium. (I often wonder why Italian sopranos use their musical vowels in this variegated manner; but they do.) A more interesting record is that made by Mary Lewis in French (D.B.810) of two excerpts from *Thaïs*. This singer, whom I recollect hearing in Vaughan Williams's opera *Hugh the Drover*, has a pleasing, well-trained voice, neat florid execution, and an unfailing rhythmical accent. She omits the recitative, *Je suis seule*, although that is the title here employed, and begins with the showy air, *Dis-moi que je suis belle*, which piece of pure Massenet she gives with all the Mary Garden effects. The other *morceau* is really *Thaïs's* part in the final duet with her monk-lover, Athanaël, which has for violin *obbligato* the famous *Méditation*, used also as an *entr'acte* and as such the chief hit of the opera. Here it accompanies the opening phrase, *Te souvient-il*; hence the use of that title.

A growth in the demand for records by Russian opera singers has been created and met principally by the H.M.V. As I have previously observed, ignorance of the language proves no obstacle to a complete enjoyment of them. It suffices to get the fine voice, the broad, masculine style, the declamatory power, the intelligent phrasing—all these qualities in combination with the melodious theme, the unwonted, exotic atmosphere of strange but haunting music. When we are listening to Chaliapine it matters not whether he is singing one of his native songs or something from one of his countrymen's operas, we yield wholly to the spell that he creates. We cannot help ourselves, nor do we want to. Chaliapine's contribution last year was from the collection of songs that he draws upon—being his own quaint announcer—at his Albert Hall recitals; and if I am not mistaken, he has been heard there both in Tchaikovsky's *Nightingale* and that terribly sad song by Alnaes, *The Last Voyage* (D.B.757). Thanks to this capital record, they can be heard to equal advantage on your own gramophone. Quite as valuable in its way is the selection of two duets from *Boris Godounov* (D.B.765), sung with all the customary Slav characteristics by Pimen and Gregory, as represented by two excellent artists, Smirnoff and Kaidanoff. The former of these also displays his resonant tenor in a still newer record (D.B.753), giving us the melody *Pourquoi mon triste cœur* with the cor anglais in a delightfully refined *mezza*

voce; and on the other side the rarely-sung duet with the soprano (Maria Davidoff) known as *O Tsarevitch, I implore thee*—both from *Boris Godounov*—which alternates between angry emphasis and passionate appeal, interesting from first to last.

Some other good additions to the H.M.V. operatic list may also be noted that I have not already dealt with. For instance, enthusiasts for the Italian tenor will not pass over Beniamino Gigli's sweet warbling of *M'appari* on the same disc as the *Paradiso* from *L'Africaine* (D.B.109). Nor will admirers of early Wagner sung in English overlook the bridal chamber love duet from *Lohengrin* (D.931), when recorded with such rare smoothness and ample volume as it is by Florence Austral and Tudor Davies. Then lovers of sheer baritone sonority who possess a wide choice of needles, will revel in the Granforte rendering of the air *O Lisbona* from Donizetti's *Don Sebastiano* (D.B.834)—an opera that makes a poor pudding, but contains excellent plums. Yet again, the early Wagnerites will probably find enjoyment in the long air *Gerechter Gott* from *Rienzi*, as executed in two parts (D.B.756) by Maartje Offers, whom I like better in this than in the *Aida* duet. Her declamation is first-rate, though her tone is frequently unsteady. Tudor Davies's English (or Welsh) versions of the two Don Ottavio airs from *Don Giovanni* (D.957) somehow got omitted from my retrospect of last month. Both might be steadier and less throaty, but they are delivered with welcome animation, and the singer's breathing capacity is amazing.

The additions for 1925 have further included several already noticed, both in these articles and in the reviews of new operatic records for October, November, and December, to which I must refer readers who have not been regularly studying the pages of THE GRAMOPHONE Magazine. It is not worth while merely to enumerate them again, nor do I feel that there is anything fresh to say about them. There remain only three or four that have quite recently come into my hands, the best of these being a 10in. Columbia (X.320) made by Riccardo Stracciari. On one side is Scarpia's soliloquy at the supper table, *Già mi dicon venal*, declaimed in a broad, sonorous manner and with considerable subtlety of inflection; on the other a *triste*, contemplative air from Catalani's opera *La Wally*, *T'amo ben io*, not vastly interesting on first hearing, but very popular, I believe, in Italy. On the whole, a record full to the brim with rich, generous tone. Students of *coloratura* will find a useful model for technique in Luella Paikin's clever treatment of two old-fashioned bird ditties (Vocalion 0236), viz., *Lo, here the gentle lark* and *La Capinera*, by Benedict, which Lemmens-Sherrington and Liebhart sang in the seventies under the title of *The bird that came in spring*.

In another Vocalion record (K.05167) Roy

Henderson has attempted Schubert's *Serenade* and the *Erl-King*, succeeding best in the former, in spite of over-darkened tone and excessive breath-pressure that result in a slight tremolo. The *Serenade* needs a lighter touch; and, by the way, the "mordent" should precede the triplet on *one* beat of the bar, not convert the whole into an ordinary "turn." For the *Erl-King* the singer requires three tone-colours, and here I find only two. There is too much of a family resemblance between the voices of father and son; while the Erl-King (whom Mr. Henderson calls the "Oil King") suggests rather the child. In the climax a sense of terror and the supernatural are lacking. Stanley Chappell's playing of the accompaniment is creditable, but one hears little of it whilst the voice is there.

HERMAN KLEIN.



New Parlophone Catalogue

A study of the complete Parlophone catalogue, which includes twenty-three supplements up to September 30th, 1925, is very impressive. So much has been achieved in so relatively short a time. Seventeen complete symphonies or symphonic works; twenty-eight orchestral records and eleven vocal records of Wagner alone, besides a most striking collection of orchestral overtures and selections from the works of other composers; the inimitable Marek Weber with no less than seventy records to his credit; Edith Lorand, the Hungarian violinist, with forty-three to hers; and Vincent Lopez with over fifty dance records, are a formidable attraction made less formidable by the low prices of the records—4s. 6d. for 12in., 3s. for 10in. And what treasures are to be found in the vocal section, which has introduced Madame Heckmann-Bettendorf and many another great singer to English audiences! These, with the Sistine Vatican Choir and the Irmeler Madrigal Ladies' Choir, have provided many a thrill during the last two years.

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Folk Dances

Mr. N. O. M. Cameron, the Editor of the *English Folk Dance Society News*, follows up his Folk Song article in our September number with one on Folk Dance Records this month. The latter is not completely up to date, since Holst's *St. Paul's Suite* and Vaughan Williams's *Old King Cole* were issued after it was written; and the promised H.M.V. series of folk dance records has not yet appeared. By the way, the *E.F.D.S. News* for October, 1923, contained, on page 150, a full account of *Old King Cole*, about which our reviewer last month was rather hazy; but whether back numbers of the *E.F.D.S. News* are as hard to obtain as back numbers of THE — or other periodicals, can only be proved by trial.

GAETANO DONIZETTI

1797—Bergamo—1848

By F SHARP

PERHAPS it is no more than a legend that in the eighteenth century Donald Izett, a Scotchman from Perthshire, went to Italy, married an Italian woman, and changed his name from Donald Izett to Donizetti; and that his son, Andrea, was the father of Gaetano Donizetti. But it is an attractive legend.

Andrea was a weaver in a very poor way of business and the early promise of his fourth son led him to hope that he would be the means of saving the family from the state of destitution to which it was reduced. Music was not thought of—the law was his ambition for Gaetano. It soon became obvious, however, that the boy's mind was entirely engrossed by the arts, and at first, as a sort of compromise, he was apprenticed to an architect. While studying this profession, he was writing poetry, and interesting himself keenly in music—so keenly that he very soon announced to his father that he wanted to make it his career. His father probably realised that Gaetano's exceptional intellectual gifts would raise him high in whatever occupation he took up, and he agreed to this project with a good grace. Gaetano went to the Conservatorio of his native city, where under Giovanni Mayr, he studied and mastered in an incredibly short time the piano, the organ, the double bass, and the violoncello. Besides all this his receptive mind was eagerly assimilating the romance of history, mythology, Latin, and poetry. This was remarkable in a period when a composer was not expected to have any education beyond the theory of music. There is a story that Mercadante set to music the stage direction *The curtain falls*, under the impression that it was part of the tenor's rôle.

In 1815 Mayr sent Donizetti to Bologna, where he studied under Mattei for three years, and composed two symphonies, and a string quartet (which, by the way, was played about fifty years later at a Monday Pop in St. James' Hall). His first opera, *Enrico di Borgogna*, was produced at Venice when he was twenty-one, and proving a success, was followed by *Il Falegname di Livorno* in 1819. His early operas are of little interest to us, but they were successful in their day, and he had no lack of contracts. He came very soon under the Rossini influence, and in 1822, when he was in Naples he made friends with Sigismondi, who was librarian to the Naples Conservatorio, where Rossini and all his works were *tabu*. Sigismondi

kept them on the very highest shelf of the library, so that they could only be reached with difficulty by a ladder. Donizetti, anxious to study the scores, persuaded Sigismondi to bring them down so that they could revile them together. This they did, and while Sigismondi was pointing out the outrageous liberties taken with the dear old conventions, Donizetti was profiting by the unique occasion of studying the master's work at first hand. It seems to us now incredible that the works of Rossini could ever have been forbidden fruit to the budding composer, but they were, and Bellini was another who secretly studied them while at the Conservatorio.

A year before this episode at the Conservatorio, Donizetti was in Rome for the production of his opera, *Zoraide*. Here he fell in love with Virginia Vasselli, the daughter of a lawyer. Her parents were as prejudiced as the parents of Maddelena in the case of Bellini, but Virginia fared better than the unhappy Maddelena, as Donizetti waited faithfully for her until his obvious eligibility was made clear to the cautious lawyer. *Zoraide* made such a sensation in Rome that influence was used to exempt its composer from military service, and he was carried in triumph and crowned at the Capitol.

The following eight years are marked by a lavish production of work, but nothing that attracted the attention of Europe until, in 1830, *Anna Bolena* was produced for the Carnival season at the Carcano, Milan. While Bellini was recuperating from his first illness on Lake Como with the Turina family, a near neighbour was the prima donna, Giuditta Pasta, under whose roof Donizetti and Romani were collaborating in the work whose success so alarmed Bellini. On the 10th November the opera was begun, and it was produced with Pasta and Rubini on the 26th December. This was nothing unusual for Donizetti. He was a prodigal genius. The creative impulse was irresistible, and there was no stemming the generous flow of his ideas. As so often happens with artists of such exuberance, the spates were nearly always the greatest works. For instance, *Don Pasquale* was composed in eleven days, *Maria di Rohan* in eight, and from 1831 to 1834 he wrote eight operas, including *Elisir d'Amore*, *Parisina*, and *Lucrezia Borgia*, all notable works. He seldom polished his work—there was no meticulous touching up—and there was little time for second thoughts. This is enough to account for the prodigious amount

of rubbish that has long been lost in oblivion. Donizetti had no illusions about his work. He was himself on much too high a plane of intelligence not to be able to appraise it at its true value. There was a bigness about him, not only in his art, but in his life. Expansive, generous, full of vigour, he lived as exuberantly as he worked. Mendelssohn writes from Naples in 1831, in a priggishly disparaging letter about that city's inhabitants:—

... Donizetti finishes an opera in ten days; to be sure, it may be hissed, but that does not matter, for he is paid all the same, and he can then go about amusing himself. If at last, however, his reputation should become endangered, he would in that case be forced really to work, which he would find by no means agreeable. Therefore he sometimes spends as much as three weeks on an opera, bestowing considerable pains on a couple of airs in it, so that they may please the public, and then he can afford once more to divert himself, and once more to write trash. . . .

Severe indeed! But Donizetti did not take himself so seriously as Mendelssohn did, nor was his financial situation so fortunate. No one more frankly kept the pot boiling than Donizetti, but what professional who lives by his art, and who lives at all, and moreover, has a wife and small children to keep, can afford to do otherwise? The precious amateur who produces two or three works in a life-time, chiselling and whittling, pointing and polishing at his leisure, living, meanwhile, on his own private means or some one else's charity, may have nothing second-rate to his discredit, but he will have no more first-rate work to his credit than the bigger man.

In 1834 Mercadante was engaged to compose *Lucrezia Borgia* with libretto by Romani for San Carlo, Naples. Six weeks before the production was due he was attacked by serious eye trouble and was condemned to a dark room before he had done a note of the opera. Donizetti came to the rescue, and produced in twenty-five days the best work he had yet done. In 1835 he was engaged by Rossini for the Carnival season at the Italian Theatre in Paris. Here the great Triumvirate met on their own ground. Bellini had three days of fever when he heard of Donizetti's engagement, and was under the impression that it was another diabolical intrigue, this time of Rossini's, to exterminate him. If it was, it was not successful, as we have seen that Bellini with his *Puritani* set all Paris talking, and Donizetti's *Marino Falieri* had only five representations to *Puritani*'s eighteen, in spite of Donizetti's great popularity with the press, and his large circle of friends. No two people could be more utterly diverse in character than these two composers. It would be absurd to pretend that there was any sympathy between them, quite apart from the jealousy

that would in any case have excluded all possibility of friendship. Bellini, a creature set apart by his physical delicacy and high sensibility from ordinary human contacts—aloof and fastidious; Donizetti, with his varying moods of shattering melancholy and high spirits, big-hearted, thoroughly human, with hosts of friends among his fellow-artists. It is not surprising that Bellini accuses him of playing the buffoon in all the houses of Paris, especially among the journalists, nor that Donizetti said some hard things about Bellini's personal relations. Their work was as diverse as their personalities. I cannot do better than quote from a lecture by the brilliant young Italian conductor and composer, Gino Marinuzzi, on this subject. He says:—

"The tears (*il pianto*) of Bellini remind me of a certain picture of the Madonna and Child, in which the Madonna sits with silent tears coursing down her cheeks. I have seldom—perhaps only once—seen a woman cry beautifully and silently like that Virgin. I do not know if you have noticed it, but most women when they cry become hideous. The tears of Bellini remind me of that Virgin and of that one woman I knew who *could* cry!

"Quite otherwise, O Signori, are the tears of Donizetti—heart-rending, broken by sobs, despairing cries of pain. . . ."

Before the end of the Paris season Donizetti left for Italy, and Bellini was master of the situation. While he was enjoying his last summer on earth, with all Paris at his feet, Donizetti was at Naples, preparing his *chef d'oeuvre*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The actual composition took six weeks, and he wrote the last two acts of the libretto himself. Cicconetti tells how one evening during the rehearsals Donizetti came home with one of his violent headaches, and found his wife and some friends playing cards. He went to bed, unable to hold his head up. In a few minutes he rang for pencil and paper. Half an hour afterwards he rang again, gave his wife the piece of paper, and put out the light, saying he had written the Cabaletto for the tenor in the last aria. The tenor, Duprez, happened to be one of the card party, and when he heard this he turned pale, and expressed himself as very much hurt that this moment had been chosen for composing the number by which he, Duprez, would stand or fall. The Cabaletto, however, turned out to be *Tu chi a Dio spiegasti l'ali*, so Duprez had nothing to complain of. Another story tells that when Donizetti was trying to work, a *zampognero*, who plays a primitive kind of bagpipe, played with maddening reiteration the same tune under his window. When his rage had subsided he took the simple tune and it became a part of *Verranno a te sul aura* in the duet of the first finale.



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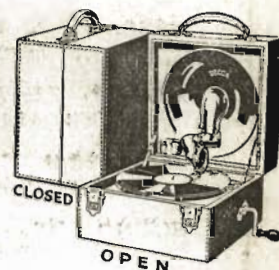
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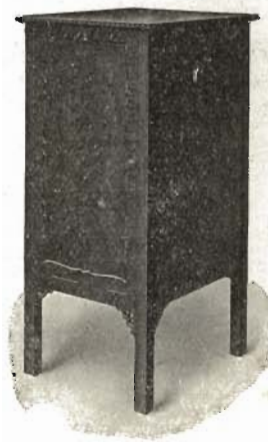
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In 1837 Donizetti was appointed Director of the Naples Conservatorio, on the death of Zingarelli. He held the appointment for two years. During this time his wife died from small-pox, after fourteen years of marriage. He had already lost the two children born to them. "Without father, mother, wife or children, for whom do I work, and why?"—"There are moments when I would give my hand to a hundred women, if I could distract myself for half an hour. I make an effort, laugh, hope, and fall back again. No one would think it, as I speak to no one of my inner sufferings—but to you only—you know me, and you only can understand."—"I have written a song sadder than myself." (This was *E morta* (*She is dead*), which was much sung at the time.)—"I can't, but I must, write an opera for December 15th, of which I hardly know the subject—hardly—hardly."—"One doesn't die of grief, otherwise I should long ago have been buried." The rest of his letters are so amusing and full of humour and show such a wise, sane outlook upon life, that these outpourings to his brother-in-law Vasselli, his sympathetic "Toto," ring very true.

In 1838 *Maria di Rudenz* was produced at Venice, but was not well received, the tragic theme and its lugubrious treatment being too much for the audience.

In 1840 Donizetti managed the Salle Ventadour in Paris, and brought out some of his most popular works. In that year *Lucia* had its first Paris performance, followed by *Figlia del Reggimento* and *La Favorita*, of which Schumann wrote as a critic no more than, "This is marionette stage music." The intense dramatic force of some of the opera was lost upon him, but he admits that he only heard two acts. This work, among others, was "copied" by young Richard Wagner, who was half starving in Paris at that time, and living chiefly on doing copyist work for a publishing firm. *La Favorita* was a great success in London with Grisi and Mario in the leading parts.

In 1842, what Donizetti himself considered the greatest honour of his life was paid to him. Rossini asked him to conduct his new work *Stabat Mater* at Bologna, and presented him to the chorus and orchestra as "my illustrious friend Donizetti, to whom I entrust the execution of my *Stabat Mater* as the only person capable of conducting and interpreting it as I have created it." After the performance Rossini kissed him publicly and presented him with a set of waistcoat buttons.

In 1842 he accepted the Court appointment that had once been filled by Mozart at Vienna, and here, among other things, it is interesting to know that he contributed a *Miserere* and *Ave Maria* to the Hofkapelle, which were highly approved by the German critics. The first opera he produced in Vienna was *Linda di Chamounix*, and this was followed, in 1843, by *Maria di Rohan*.

His appointment at Vienna did not keep him there all the year, and in 1843 he was in Paris again, and *Don Pasquale*, far the best of his light operas, was produced with Grisi, Lablache, and Tamburini. Why this delightful work is so seldom heard nowadays is a mystery. Fortunately, there are some good records to be had of its principal songs. It needs highly trained voices, but the music is as fresh and melodious as Sullivan's, and as witty.

With the production of this light-hearted work, we must say farewell to the Donizetti of the flashing pen, the jolly companion. He began *Dom Sebastiano*, his most ambitious work. The clouds were gathering. "*Dom Sebastiano* is killing me," he writes. There were continual demands for alterations during rehearsals. The directors were never satisfied; Donizetti was exasperated. At last it was produced, and it fell flat. It was heavy, dull, and much too long, the Parisians thought—"a funeral in five acts." The critics were merciless. Donizetti left for Naples. Young Verdi, whose *I Foscari* had just been produced, wrote:—

"Poor Donizetti has been treated worse than I, and has fled with a mocking smile from Paris, wrapped in his mantle of glory, which all the Delecluzes of his time cannot pull from his shoulders..." Delecluze was a critic. Donizetti had already recognised the genius of Verdi, and said: "He is the man who will shine, you'll see."

At Naples *Caterina Cornaro*, the last work produced during his lifetime, was a failure. Deeply depressed, especially about the failure of *Dom Sebastiano*, which he considered his best work, he went to Vienna, and was much cheered by its production in German. It pleased the Viennese and was done forty times that year. His letters at this time reveal the utter fatigue of his mind. He is still working with the same fierce energy of better days. "I am worked like a horse. To eat, sleep, get up, dress myself, undress myself, play billiards, etc., and all this in twenty-four hours! *Oh, non ne posso più, ti giuro!*"

After the consoling success of *Dom Sebastiano* in Vienna he goes to Paris, and one day is found insensible on the floor. He told the doctor that he had two fountains of inspiration, one on the left side of his brain, which was Comedy, and one on the right, Tragedy. These two overpowered him when composing. An operation was performed on his head, and he recovered for a time and began a new work for the Italian Theatre, but he was immediately attacked by nervous horrors again and his pen was taken from him. The mental malady set in, and so swiftly did it overtake him that instead of taking him to Italy as had been arranged, Vasselli decided to put him in an asylum.

It was pretended that a letter from the Court at Vienna had come asking him to wind up his affairs there, and he set out with every resource for the long journey. At Ivry, a breakdown was arranged, and the postilions assured him that it was impossible to go on that night. Through a damp garden Donizetti and his friend approached a dreary, unlit house. He entered it under the impression that it was a hotel. The asylum doctor acted the part of host. Here he remained many months. Sometimes the cloud lifted, and he realised partially where he was, enough at any rate to wonder why his friends always left him there, when they came to see him; but most of the time he sat in a melancholy silence, only murmuring sometimes, "Dom Sebastiano, Dom Sebastiano——" Someone came from Vienna to see him, and kneeling before him, looked into his face. Donizetti recognised him, and much moved, said with a look of awful comprehension, "I am mad, my friend, I am mad!"

His brother, Giuseppe, who held a good appointment in the Turkish army, thanks originally to the Sultan's admiration for Gaetano's music, was summoned by Vasselli from Constantinople, but being unable to leave, sent his son. After a good deal of difficulty it was arranged that Donizetti should be taken to Italy, and at last, in 1847, he set out with his nephew and Vasselli for Bergamo. The journey was undertaken at a difficult time. France was in a state of upheaval. Louis Philippe and his consort, as Mr. and Mrs. Smith, were flying ignominiously to England. Italy was just beginning to throw off the hated Austrian yoke; the country was not in an ideal state for travelling in a post-chaise under any circumstances, and on the way Donizetti was stricken with paralysis, and died soon after he arrived in Bergamo.

About thirty years after his death, the opera *Il Duca di Alba* was produced. The libretto was done by Scribe for Rossini, who refused it, and handed it on to Donizetti, who never finished it. It was completed by Matteo Salvi.

Donizetti's piano can be seen at the Municipio, Bergamo. He left it to his brother-in-law, Vasselli, with the following instructions:—

"Do not sell at any price the pianoforte which holds within it all my artistic life. From 1822 it has rung in my ears; there whisper all the Annas, the Marias, the Lucias, the Marinis. Oh! let it live as long as I live. In its company I spent the hopeful years—married life—loneliness. It heard my joys, my sorrows, my vain hopes, honours; it shared with me toil and stress—it holds every epoch of my career, within it lives my inspiration. Give it to no one—it was Hers!"

DONIZETTI RECORDS.

Don Pasquale.

- H.M.V.
D.A.326 Martinelli, *Com' è gentil.*
D.K.102. Bori and De Luca, *Pronta io son.*
D.B.259. Galli-Curci, *Quel guardo, il cavaliere.*
D.B.567. Graziella Pareto, *Quel guardo, il cavaliere.*
D.K.102. Bori and De Luca, *Vado, corro.*
Fonotipia.
39685. Bonci, *Cercherò lontana terra.*
92329. Bonci and Corradetti, *Prender moglie.*
Idem, *Sono soave.*
39939. De Luca, *Bella siccome un angelo.*

Duca D'Alba.

- H.M.V.
D.B.640. Caruso, *Angelo casto e bel.*

Elisir D'Amore.

- H.M.V.
D.B.324. MacCormack, *Una furtiva lagrima.*
D.M.107. Caruso and De Luca, *Venti scudi.*
Columbia.
D.8086. Bonci, *Quanto e bella.*
D.17204. Bonci, *Una furtiva lagrima.*
Fonotipia.
62272. Anselmi, *Una furtiva lagrima.*
39687. Bonci, *Quanto e bella.*
92571/2. Corradetti and Choir, *Udite, udite o rustici.*
Idem, *Ei muove i paralitici.*

La Favorita.

- H.M.V.
D.B.273. Gigli, *Spirito gentile.*
D.B.220. De Luca, *A tanto amor!*
D.B.148. Battistini, *Vien Leonora.*
Fonotipia.
39338. Bonci, *Spirito gentil.*
62318/9. Anselmi, *Spirito gentil* and *Una vergine.*
752014. Lauri-Volpi, *Una vergine.*
74910. Lauri-Volpi, *Spirito gentil.*
152582. Pollicino, *Una vergine.*
152033. Mariano Stabile, *A tanto amor.*
92428/9. Stracciari, *Vien Leonora* and *A tanto amor.*
92360/1. Oreste Luppi with Choir, *Splendon piu belle* and *Bell'alba foriera.*
92054/5. Parsi-Pettinella (mezzo-soprano), *O mio Fernando* and *Su, crudel.*

Figlia di Reggimento.

- H.M.V.
D.B.631. MacCormack, *Per viver vicino.*

Linda di Chamounix.

- H.M.V.
D.B.204. Battistini, *Ambo nati in questa valle.*
D.B.597. Galli-Curci, *O luce di quest'anima.*

Fonotipia.

- 39840/1. Mezzo-soprano, Petri and Corradetti,
Vi dico che partiate and A die il vero.
39402. Rosina Storchio (soprano), *O luce di quest'anima.*
92775. Idem, *Al ben destin.*
Lucrezia Borgia.

H.M.V.

- D.A.141. Sophie Breslau, *Segreto per essere felici.*
D.B.403. Chaliapin, *Vieni la mia vendetta.*

Fonotipia.

62273. Anselmi, *Di pescator ignobile.*
Lucia di Lammermoor.

H.M.V.

- D.B.364. Dame Melba, *Ardon gli incensi.*
D.B.699. Enzo Pinza, *Dalla stanza, ove Lucia.*
D.B.260. Galli-Curci, *Dolce suono* (mad scene).
D.B.712. Dal Monte, *Ardon gli incensi.*
D.B.332. Martinelli, *Fra poco a me ricovero and Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali.*
D.B.345. MacCormack, *idem.*
D.A.214. Galli-Curci, *Spargi d'amaro pianto.*
D.B.712. Toti dal Monte, *idem.*
D.Q.100. Caruso, Galli-Curci, etc., Sextet, *Chi me frena.*
D.Q.101. Caruso, Sembrich, etc., *idem.*
2-054034. Caruso, Tetrizzi, etc., *idem.*

Columbia.

7236. Maria Barrientos, *Regnava nel silenzio.*
A.5 217. Constantino (tenor), *Fra poco a me ricovero.*

Fonotipia.

- 39693/4. Bonci, *Tombe degli avi and Fra poco a me ricovero.*
74921. Mario Stabile, *Cruda funesta smania.*
74936/7. Pertile, *Fra poco a me ricovero and Tu che a Dio.*
74017. Martinez Patti, etc., *Chi mi frena* (sextet).

Maria di Rohan.

H.M.V.

- D.B.147. Battistini, *Bella e di sol vestita and Voce fatal di morte.*

Maria di Rudenz.

H.M.V.

- D.B.150. Battistini, *Ah, non avea piu lagrime.*

The Fonotipia records can be had through the Parlophone Co. and the Gramophone Exchange, 29 New Oxford Street. They are worth the trouble of getting and the bother of waiting for those who appreciate brilliant vocal recording. The Fonotipia Company specially recommend both the Stabile records mentioned, and Stracciari's *Vien Leonora*. The tenor Pertile, who made such a sensation in Boito's *Nerone*, has done, in the *Lucia* record, what the Company considers the best disc in their catalogue. He has a lyric voice of moving quality,

and the other young singer, the baritone, Mario Stabile has made magnificent records. Up to the present, as far as I know, they have not recorded for any other company, so the only chance of hearing them is to order the Fonotipia discs and have patience.

The Pathé Co. has recorded *La Favorita* complete on twenty records, and eight records in French of *Figlia di Reggimento*, besides Tito Schipa singing *Cerchero lontana terra* from *Don Pasquale*, and Noté in *D'un Amour qui me brave*.

Among Edison records which I have not heard is the sextet, from *Lucia*—two renderings on one record, one led by Alice Verlet and the other by Marie Rappold. Anselmi sings *Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali*, Anna Case the *Mad Scene*, and Ciccolini *Fra poco a me ricovero*. From *Lucrezia Borgia* Margaret Matzenauer sings *Il segreto per essere felici*. Mario Laurenti sings *Ah tanto amor* from *La Favorita*, Albert Lindquest sings *Angel of Light*, Ciccolini sings *Spirito gentil*, and Taurini Parvis *Vien Leonora* from the same opera. Consuelo de Castro makes a probably unique record of *So anch'io la virtù magica* from *Don Pasquale*.

In the Polydor catalogue there are also a few examples. Carl Günther sings the romance, *Heimlich aus ihrem Auge (una furtiva lagrima)*, from *Elisir d'Amore*; Piccaver sings *Einsam auf Erden (Deserto in terra)* from *Dom Sebastiano*; Hermine Bosetti gives the *Mad Scene*, Claire Dux and Jadlowker the duet, *An des Todes heiliger Stätte* from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and Kate Herwig sings *Weiss nicht die Welt and So leb' denn wohl* from *Figlia di Reggimento*. It would no doubt be possible to increase this list from other catalogues, but enough has been given to indicate the ground covered by the records.

I see that I have forgotten any mention of *O Lisbona* from *Dom Sebastiano*, which is sung by Battistini in the H.M.V. No. 2 Catalogue. The best version, however, to my mind, is by Eric Marshall on Vocalion K05143.

The portrait of Donizetti is from the collection of Signor Gaspare Casella of Naples. F#

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THE BAND OF H.M. LIFE GUARDS (1st and 2nd)

By W. A. CHISLETT

THE story of the Life Guards really begins with the restoration of King Charles II. to the throne of his ancestors. From the death of Charles I. on the scaffold in 1649, Prince Charles, his son, was an exile until May 29th, 1660, his birthday, when he was welcomed home again and received with open arms in London, through the beflagged

troop consisted of two hundred private gentlemen together with four trumpeters and one kettledrummer to provide "the King his musick." These five gentlemen were no ordinary people for they held warrants of appointment signed by the King himself, were clothed at His Majesty's personal expense in gorgeous uniforms of velvet, silver and lace,



streets of which he rode accompanied by a body of Cavaliers, under the command of Lord Gerard, who had attached themselves to the King while he was still an exile. These Cavaliers formed the original King's Troop of Life Guards and the four trumpeters and kettledrummer who rode at the head of the column their band!

Parliament, however, ordered the army to be disbanded, and it was not until 1661—after the Venner Riots—when the King formed "His Majesty's Own Troop of Guards," and the Dukes of York and Albemarle also founded similar troops, that the Corps was officially established. Each

embroidered on the breast and back with the Royal Cipher, and were paid at the then princely rate of five shillings per day. This amount, however, was paid by no means regularly, and even when available was subject to "certain deductions."

Charles II. who was, owing to his many, not too weary, years in exile, much influenced by French tastes, had been so pleased by the French regimental bands composed of hautbois and drums that he decided to introduce this combination of instruments into his Guards. The hautbois were, however, only used on dismounted occasions while the trumpets and kettledrums continued to serve for mounted

duties. In the course of time an amalgamation took place; the rank of "hautbois" was abolished and the trumpeters became "double-handed." This is still the case to-day, the same individuals forming a brass band when mounted and a full wind band when dismounted.

It is not surprising to find, in an age when gentlemen settled their personal differences with the sword, that the trumpeters also were men of spirit. On the 19th September, 1719, the *Weekly Post* reported that "On Sunday night last Mr. Davin the famous trumpeter of the 1st Troop of Life Guards fought a duel at the 'Red Cow,' behind St. Clements, in which he received three wounds, two in the breast, seven inches, and one in the belly, ten inches; yet they are not supposed to be mortal." Evidently "the famous trumpeter" was tough!

In 1788 the Life Guards were completely reorganised. The 1st Troop became the First Regiment of Life Guards, and the 2nd Troop the Second Regiment of Life Guards; and so they remained until 1922, when they were amalgamated and became "The Life Guards (1st and 2nd)."

It appears curious to-day to note the great importance and prestige that used to be attached to the kettledrum, the use of which was at one time restricted to members of the Royal Body-guard. In 1660, the drummers of the Life Guards Band had the exclusive privilege of beating these instruments and, as recently as 1831, although the privilege had by that time lapsed, King William IV. expressed his royal favour by presenting to the regiment a pair of silver kettledrums.

From this small beginning has grown a full military band consisting of forty instrumentalists divided as follows: Two flutes, two oboes, two E flat clarinets, ten B flat clarinets, one alto saxophone, one tenor saxophone, two bassoons, four French horns, three first cornets (B flat), two second cornets, two tenor trombones, one bass trombone, two euphoniums, four basses, and two drums.

The full band is, of course, rarely heard at a concert, and for the many excellent records made for the Vocalion Company a band of twenty-five or so is used, similar in composition to the band that plays from time to time in the parks and halls of most of the principal cities and towns in Great Britain. Extensive tours are undertaken every year and huge audiences are attracted, particularly in the industrial towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire, where the people know how to appreciate a military band and recognise one that is first class when they hear it.

The early bandmasters were mostly foreigners, as was the custom. The first who has any particular claim to attention is a Mr. Bies, who was originally a member of the Duke of Kent's Band. On the death of the Duke, in 1820, Bies went to the Life Guards, taking with him a composition of the

Duchess of Kent's (Queen Victoria's mother) which was afterwards adopted as the Regimental Slow March. Others who were famous in the nineteenth century were Signor Ulricco and James Waddell.

The present Director of Music, Lieut. Henry Eldridge, after many years as an instrumentalist, was appointed bandmaster to the Durham Light Infantry in 1910, transferred to the Royal Artillery Band, Plymouth, in 1920, and received his present appointment in 1921.

One of the many charms of Lieut. Eldridge is his gift as a raconteur; and since he has played in all corners of Great Britain and under all kinds of conditions, many of his experiences have their humorous side. The band was engaged at Wembley in September, 1924, and after nearly a fortnight's continuous rain the men were feeling rather tired of playing in the wet and to an audience of empty chairs. One particularly bad night the programme included the *Andante* and *Waltz* from Tchaikovsky's *Fifth Symphony* and Lieut. Eldridge, resisting the temptation to substitute something lighter, played it in full. At the end of the waltz there was not a soul in sight until, from under the shelter of the bandstand itself, staggered a very wet and drunken female who turned round and called out in a would-be seductive voice: "Now give us a bit of jazz, dearie." Needless to say the bandsmen were delighted!

The records made by this band are wonderfully true to the original and particularly free from the objectionable, but by no means uncommon, fault of sounding as if they had been made by a "skeleton band"; on the contrary, there is a depth and mellowness of tone which one associates with a large band. From Lieut. Eldridge we are always sure of a well-thought out and carefully prepared performance and he possesses a very fine sense of rhythm which gives all his interpretations a tremendous vitality.

On being asked which, in his opinion, was the best record the band had made, Lieut. Eldridge cautiously and modestly replied: "I think our record of Liszt's *No. 2 Hungarian Rhapsody* about the best, if my memory serves." It is almost impossible to pick out any one as the best, but a selection from Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 1 and 2*, the *Flying Dutchman Overture*, *La Boutique Fantasque*, Holst's *Suite in F*, Vaughan Williams's *Folk Song Suite*, Berlioz's *Le Carnaval Romain Overture*, and Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italien* should be included in all representative libraries of records.

That the members of the band are not wholly occupied in ceremonial and concert work has been shown many times in history, and at no time more than in the course of the Great War, during which, although the two bands visited France twice as units, most of the individuals in them served in the ranks at one period or another. W. A. CHISLETT.

BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS

By THE LONDON EDITOR

THIS opportunity must be taken, as it was last year, to wish our readers a happy New Year, and at the same time to thank them one and all for the unflagging friendliness and encouragement which make the work of Editor and Helots alike a pleasant service; a service increasingly pleasant as the circle widens, because the old enthusiasts are as keen as ever and the new ones assume in an instant the spirit which has for three years made *THE GRAMOPHONE* a vehicle for expression, a meeting ground for debate and a bureau for information among the record-hunting public. Amateurish as the compilation may still be, it has a quality of its own—a candour and a liveliness—for which we may all be grateful to the contributors. They are indefatigable, prodigal, voluminous; from all corners of the world they send their tribute of information or opinion to swell the common fund, and when one remembers that in the early days friendly critics used to say, "But how on earth will you get material to fill the paper?" one is amused by the emptiness of the objection. The difficulty is just the opposite; and our thanks to the contributors whose work has been published in the last twelve months are extended equally to those whose stamped and addressed envelope has reluctantly been used.

None of this amiable interchange of news and views in the pages of *THE GRAMOPHONE* would have been possible without the co-operation of the trade; and once again we acknowledge, with more gratitude than ever, the unhesitating support of our many friends who not only help us with their advertisements, but never grudge us the trouble and expense which our demands for records (for early review or for special articles) and for machines and accessories (for the dissecting room of the Expert Committee) may cause them. Luckily for us and our readers, this is also good business. It has been abundantly proved in the last three years that those who have the goods to sell have found *THE GRAMOPHONE* an advertising medium second to none. By supporting us in these early days they have scored heavily, and we are honestly proud that they have.

There are others too who deserve a word of thanks, the concert agents and box-office managers who have sent press tickets. Over and over again notices of concerts have been squeezed out by more essentially gramophonic matters; but sooner or later it will be found that this courtesy has not been unwise.

Now for a moment's stock-taking. During the last year on the technical side we can record progress.

The hint about needle-track alignment given a year ago has borne fruit, and no new machine of any importance has been put on the market which does not satisfy our demands—a maximum error of 8° at any point in a twelve-inch record. In view of the apathy and scepticism with which this matter was received at the beginning—even in the highest quarters—the success of Mr. Wilson's crusade is a definite achievement. Secondly, during the year we have established our Expert Committee, which works furiously but silently and has already earned the respect and even gratitude of those amateurs and manufacturers who have submitted their productions for examination. The members of the committee were very carefully chosen to supplement and balance each other; they give up much time, ill-spaced from their regular occupations, to interesting but none the less fatiguing researches; and we all owe them a debt of gratitude. Thirdly, the Rev. L. D. Griffith's discovery, or re-discovery, of the Lifebelt has opened up a new realm of reproduction for our readers. It is too early to say that the Lifebelt is the most important development of *THE GRAMOPHONE* in 1925, but first reports from readers who are experimenting with it are as excited as those of the Editor to the London Office last summer.

On the non-technical side every number during the last twelve months has contained a quantity—perhaps a preponderance—of information about records which is valuable for reference rather than for immediate use, except in the case of millionaires. Especially practical is the list of the hundred most popular records of tried favourites, which is completed in this number. Reviews of new records have been in very good hands, and any shortcomings have been due to circumstances which even the most agile critic, working against time always, cannot prevent. The grouping of records for review is an improvement for the reader, but it has wasted some precious hours each month. Steadily we are building up a series of translations of vocal records, and in *Following the Score* a series of notes for the user of miniature scores.

Of the side-shows, the National Gramophonic Society is flourishing and has an attractive programme for this year; the Gramophone Congress at the Central Hall and the gramophone tests at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, in July, were a great success; the *Player-Piano Supplement* was dropped at the end of Vol. II.; "*Gramophone Tips*," by Captain H. T. Barnett was published at the beginning of the year and "*Thoughts on Music*," a charming

anthology compiled by one of our earliest readers, Mr. Hervey Elwes, at the end of the year.

Of the programme for 1926 there is little to say. The articles on Mozart in the December number will be completed in the next one. We want authoritative and comprehensive articles on the recorded works of composers and we want similar articles on gramophone celebrities, major and minor. There cannot be too much weeding out of bad records and starrng of good ones—a labour to which each reader can make contribution. Suggestions for improvements are always welcome, and so is adverse criticism. Only apathy is to be deplored. Every reader can help us to make THE GRAMOPHONE better, not least by active propaganda among friends, at the local bookstall and music shop, and by mentioning the paper whenever an order for a record or a machine is given. In the aggregate all these little efforts will increase our power to go forward to greater strength.

Is it necessary to conclude with an apology for any trace of unctuous complacency in the foregoing remarks? If so, let the apology be made. But our regular readers know that we write always as if we were among friends, colloquially—not dispassionately, fearing the cold verdict of an unknown public. A really illuminating instance, by the way, of the confidence that has grown up between us and our readers and the trade occurred in the November number, where, with a naïveté somewhat bold in retrospect, the Editor's article on the new H.M.V. gramophones was followed almost on the next page by the information that "the Gramophone Co. sent us no less than three of the finest models... a princely gift which is deeply appreciated." Although the post-bag on the first few days of the month is always full of letters commenting upon the contents of the new number, will it be believed that not a single reader has yet expressed a scepticism as to the value of the Editor's appreciation of the H.M.V. No. 4? No one has written to discount the praise bestowed upon it because "he could hardly help praising it." Probably a good many people thought that we were asking for trouble; but the fact that no one thought fit to write on the subject, though hardly credible, is astonishingly creditable to our readers. May this spirit of mutual confidence be maintained unimpaired during the coming years!

* * *

An Interesting Competition

The "novel competition" announced by the S.E. London Recorded Music Society in our last issue—with prizes offered by two of its patrons, one of them Mr. Yeomans, of the Gramophone Co., Ltd., who was present; the other, Mr. Compton Mackenzie—took place on December 14th, and consisted of two parts. In the former the audience

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was asked to write down the titles of six records (selected from those played to the Society during the last year) which were played through to them; in the latter to place the six records in order of their "general appeal." The records chosen were as follows:—(i) *Io son Titania* from *Mignon* (Thomas), sung by Evelyn Scotney. (ii) *Gigue* from *Sonata in C major* (Bach), played by d'Aranyi and Fachiri. (iii) *Spinning Chorus* from the *Flying Dutchman* (Wagner), sung by the Grand Opera Chorus. (iv) *Orchestral Interlude and Procession of the Guilds* from *Meistersinger* (Wagner), played by R.A.H.O., under Albert Coates. (v) "*Dorabella*" from *Enigma Variations* (Elgar), played by N.Q.H.O., under Sir Henry Wood. (vi) *Invocation to the Nile*, and *Lament of Isis* from *Songs of Egypt* (Bantock), sung by Leila Megane.

The above is the order of general appeal, the result of the second competition, which was won by Messrs. L. G. Butler and H. H. Flint, who tied. The voting lacked unanimity, except with regard to the first place.

For the previous competition the records were played in the order 1, 4, 2, 5, 6, 3; and Mr. F. C. Palethorpe won with 101 out of a possible 120 points. He came to grief over No. 6, naming only the singer. But it was a commendable achievement. Miss Gamon was second with 85 points, and Mr. Kingslake was unlucky in only getting 79 points for third place.

* * *

Five Pounds to Spend

How much did you spend on records last year? How much could you have saved if you had waited till now to choose them? If you were limited to an expenditure of Five Pounds for the year would there be many records omitted which you would enormously regret? The Music Critic of *The Universe* gave his list in the issue for December 4th, and it comes to £4 17s., comprising eighteen records: a most thoughtful and discriminating list, but one with which few of us would agree in every detail.

* * *

The Music Society

A fine tribute to the work which M. André Mangeot has done for music in this country during the last fifteen years will be found in the December number of the *London Mercury*. Those who heard the Music Society String Quartet play for us at the Caxton Hall last July, or who are members of the National Gramophonic Society, will be best able to judge how lucky we are to have issued the first records ever made by M. Mangeot and his brilliant colleagues.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

From a "Gramophone Tips" point of view

By H. T. BARNETT, M.I.E.E.

NOTHING whatever, technically or musically, has materialised during the past twelve months to make it necessary for me to re-write or even to revise my little handbook for gramophonists. On the contrary, nearly all contributions to new design and to recent practice but emphasise and give added weight to each word then written.

TECHNICAL SECTION.

NEEDLE-TRACK ALIGNMENT.—Three years ago I coined this not quite perfect phrase to designate that attribute the correctness of which I consider to be of *primary* importance in the design of any gramophone. For more than two years past the strong and fearless attitude of this magazine, on the same subject, especially in the fine articles contributed later by Mr. P. Wilson, has been most valuable. Nearly all new machines this year, and not a few of the old ones, have been brought sufficiently near to theoretical requirements in this direction, with the result that reproduction is greatly improved and damage to records lessened or entirely abolished.

COUNTERBALANCE DEVICES.—The back weight for straight-pattern tone-arms has been tried out fully on the Peridulce (made under my patents) and it has also been fitted to many machines by amateurs, in the way described in my book. I have many letters saying how fully it realises the three desiderata it was designed to produce. I hope every owner of a straight-pattern tone-arm machine, whether the horn be enclosed or open, will fit this device so readily improvised from a strip of sheet-lead. When *fine* steel needles *only* are to be used it should be noted that the weight on the needle need not exceed two ounces.

THE GOOSE NECK.—Here again we have been most successful; on nearly all good machines made in this country to-day this interference and blast-producing abomination has been abolished. The only cause for regret is that some designers have yielded to convention so far as to put a swivel joint in the tone-arm; few of these are chatter-proof when new, and how many of them will not prove a fruitful source of blast and spoil all records after only a few months' use? In my opinion, it is easier to work a gramophone without such a device than with it, and I hope they will soon disappear.

SAXOPHONE HORNS.—The first machine I saw having this type of amplifier was the old German arrangement with an Aeolian harp across the horn exit and which was sold extensively to refreshment houses. Then, in this country, followed the Waveola, the Apollo IV., and the New H.M.V. The tone *volume* especially of all these machines is much larger than that of an *average* machine with a short acoustic system, but, in my opinion, it is no greater than can be got with a *correctly* shaped acoustic system not more than three feet in length and occupying the same amount of space and which would be free from the megaphone characteristic, the directional shooting of tone and the trumpet-like reinforcement of overtones generally attendant upon the unduly long horn. I believe the fashion will have a short life.

LARGE SOUND-BOXES.—Three years ago I tried the Thorens Pianina box on my own machine, and since then I have not been able to listen with patience to small boxes. I have done everything in my power to boost big boxes, believing that the bad name the gramophone had among musical people was chiefly due to the treble-favouring characteristic of small ones. The great and rapidly increasing favour into which sound-boxes having a correct scale balance have come is a most cheering sign of the times and well repays the ding-dong work that was necessary to get the importance of this attribute generally realised.

THE "LIFEBELT" OR RUBBER NECK.—From the offices of this magazine there may be obtained a rubber junction piece for use between the neck of the sound-box and the small end of the tone-arm. Every owner of one of the scores of thousands of machines having a goose neck and bad track alignment should get one of these; the extra length brings the sound-box more to the right and so improves things a good deal, and it is a better means to this end than a pair of metal adaptors which quite likely will not fit too well. All users of small mica sound-boxes should try one; I have only heard it on one machine so fitted, the metal horn gramophone at 58, Frith Street, and in this case it was a distinct improvement. All users of coarse needles should try one; it is reasonable to suppose the needle may better be kept down to its work. In fitting this device to the goose neck machines referred to, two corrections must be made,

one for sag or drop and one for twist. In fitting it to machines having correct track alignment, another correction must be made for sound-box angle to prevent the track alignment from being prejudiced. I have tried this device on the Peridulce with its own sound-box and needles; neither my friends nor I can find that it makes the least difference to any one of the characteristics of reproduction.

MOTORS.—Winding before each record as I do, I like nothing so well as the Collaro with the single large spring; this motor in my hardest worked machine has been in use for a year, has not been looked at or touched, and remains silent and in every way as new. For a *short wind* motor to be worked almost continuously in a dealer's demonstration room I have seen nothing better than the "Motor of Quality." The solitary new production of the year and one deserving very special mention to long-play enthusiasts, is the *de luxe* Garrard all-enclosed unit, which is probably the finest thing of the kind in the world. As an electrician, naturally I continue to hope for the production of an electric drive for gramophones, one that may be used on any circuit voltage, from 110 to 240, but I regret I have not yet seen one that satisfies me.

SOUND-BOX DIAPHRAGMS.—The aluminium diaphragm I have adopted as standard has given no trouble at all.

Mr. F. Jackson has discovered an extraordinarily non-scratch diaphragm, which he is fitting to his Ruby Emperor and other sound-boxes; it shows appreciably less surface noise even than aluminium, reduces the effect of blast where it occurs on some records, is rather sweeter than truth in tone quality, is fairly good at detail, and has nearly the tone volume of aluminium. It is cut from an opaque white glossy surfaced material, which varies not too greatly under English climatic conditions.

Mr. S. A. Hurren has sent me a remarkably clever piece of work in a diaphragm that makes what I believe is likely to prove to be an entirely new departure in sound-box construction. This diaphragm, on test, proved to be enormously better than an ordinary one of the same kind to which Mr. Hurren's invention had not been applied. I asked Mr. Hurren to apply his invention to a sound-box having a thoroughly unsatisfactory diaphragm and which I sent him. He was good enough to do so with the result that the box was greatly improved. I have just sent Mr. Hurren the best sound-box I have with a request that he will fit that also; should it improve this good diaphragm as it did the bad one *or at all*, Mr. Hurren clearly will have made a valuable advance in gramophone science concerning which it will be my duty to advise you.

The new H.M.V. (No. 4) sound-box better than

anything bears out the force of my continued contention. Its large diameter ensures correct scale balance and good tone volume in the bass. The absence of steel tension springs is a good point; they are nearly always a cause of blast and rattle. Some people suppose a spring is necessary, to "recover" the diaphragm as they say, but, of course, this cannot be the case when a sinuous groove on the face of the records produces the vibration of the diaphragm, for obviously the motion is just as positive outwardly as inwardly. The only departure from absolute purity of design is probably intentional; there is a constriction before the sound-box neck and this upsets the sound-waves enough to produce a little of that interference characteristic that many people like and call brilliance. To everyone who dislikes the ordinary large box and feels disposed to call it "tubby" I would say, go out and buy a "brilliant" H.M.V. No. 4 and enjoy the bass of your music as well as the treble.

A word of warning: No large diameter sound-box can be truly heard on an impure acoustic system.

NEEDLES.—I try every needle that comes upon the market possessed of any new characteristic. I am still using *fine* steel needles in a grip exclusively. I cannot endure any other needle, because I want a full tone with little scratch, perfect detail and tone characteristic, and no wear on my records. But I regret that for all machines having bad track alignment I must still say that fibres are the only needles that will not ruin a record for my ear in a single running. All my nearly new records are *better* than new and all my old records are in better condition than they were a year ago. Come and see them.

STYLUS-BAR ANGLE.—In this respect, too, my advocacy for a less steep needle angle has been ratified by recent improved practice. In nearly all machines produced during the year, including the new H.M.V., a less steep angle than 60° is favoured, with a rectification in that direction in several of the older makes.

STORAGE OF RECORDS.—The only novel feature I have noticed has been the production of a frame model "Jussrite" file, quite inexpensive, for fitting into the lower part of the case of any cabinet gramophone.

THE SONATAB.—The simplest possible *sweet-toned* machine that an amateur can make was described in the issue of this magazine for April last. Any favourite motor, tone-arm or sound-box can be used. The machine itself may be seen by appointment at the office of this publication.

TABLE MACHINES.—The Murdoch Trading Company has produced a large table grand Peridulce to my own designs.

For those who want an inexpensive medium-sized table machine the seven-guinea Dousona is now the best I know. It is worth putting a good

65 mm. sound-box on to. I could not design a machine of the size or price to give a better all-round result.

RECORD SECTION

IMPROVED RECORDING.—For great *ensemble* records, if for nothing else, the new method has value. Quite the most conclusive proof of this is afforded by the Columbia GREAT MALE VOICE CHOIR record *Adeste Fideles*. It was given to me in great disgust by a friend on whose machine, fitted with a very small mica sound-box, it sounded more like a complicated cat fight in a mustard mill than anything else I can imagine. I brought it home and put it on my own gramophone and the result overwhelmed me; it was just as if the doors of my machine were a window opening on to the great hall in which the concert was held. If it produces any less perfect result in your hands blame your reproducing apparatus and not the record. The extraordinary thing about the record, and that which differentiates it most notably from other choir records I have is that one can hear the hall as well as the singers. A similar effect is obtained in the new process Brunswick ORCHESTRAL record *Cavalleria Rusticana*, which is a great improvement all round on former similar recordings; the strings are strings and *not* brass. For records by small numbers of performers the best new recording I have is again a Brunswick, the STRING QUARTET *Grieg, in G minor*; its fidelity is electrifying. I have not yet heard any of the new recordings in which the tone is *sweet*; for example, some piano records sound as if the hammers of the piano had no felt on them! There is a suggestion of "wireless" in the tone of most of them. I fear there is iron in the devices used.

ACO (Duncan Avenue, Gray's Inn Road).—It should be noted that while the 12in. numbers at present on the list will be obtainable for some time to come, fresh 12in. records will not be produced. There is recently a great improvement in the recording of pianoforte accompaniments. During the year the extreme perfection of the contralto and mezzo-soprano records has been very notable; with the exception of some of the Edith Furse numbers any of these records may be ordered from list with the expectation of hearing every word clearly. Miss Francis Fisher's recent record *Sink Red Sun* (2s. 6d.) should be bought and this singer's work particularly should be followed.

BELTONE (59, Clerkenwell Road, E.C.).—A great list for Scots records. I have no records so pleasing to children as the Palm Beach Marimba Band numbers. Twelve inch 4s. ORCHESTRAL numbers that may be put among the best are *March Slav* and the *Ride of the Valkyries*. Absolutely the best MILITARY BAND 2s. 6d. record I have (it stands alone unfortunately) is the *Coronation March* from *Le Prophete*, by the Florantine Band.

BRUNSWICK (50, New Bond Street, W. 1).—For vigorous pianoforte records I put Brunswicks at the head of what I call the *sostenuto* school of recording. Concerning the recent recordings see my notes above. A record of great beauty that every collector of UNCOMMON RECORDS should buy is the Harpsichord solo *Harmonious Blacksmith*.

COLUMBIA (Clerkenwell Road).—See my note above on the new methods of recording. I am told the vocal quartets are very fine; I have not heard them. There have been further recordings of my favourite military band, the Grenadier Guards, and by my favourite CHAMBER MUSIC performers the All Celebrity Trio—*Spanish Bolero* is a fine example.

DUOPHONE (18, Savile Row, W. 1).—A newcomer, and very welcome, with Colonel Mackenzie-Rogan's conducting. Examples of this musician's work that should be acquired

are: ORCHESTRAL, *Petite Suite de Concert*, Coleridge Taylor (4s.); MILITARY BAND, *Prince Igor Selection*, Borodin (4s.). Both these are most happily chosen.

FONOTIPIA (85, City Road).—Foremost for Italian operatic vocal recording. The duets are wonderful. A single record of any number may be obtained from the list.

GRAFTON (Scala Co., City Road, E.C.).—Most beautifully manufactured 2s. dance records recorded by some of the best American bands. *Doo Wacka Doo* shows the drum.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—Both surface and composition of these records are now perfect. The surface-noise is now the faintest silky rush, free from crepitation. Under correct playing conditions the records remain as new. The Galli-Curci records are my favourites on the list; it enormously adds to the pleasure of listening to this singer's incomparably delicate and perfect work to get the voice with no disturbing noises to distract one's attention.

HOMOCHORD (19, City Road, E.C.).—You all know by this time what I think of Mr. Sternberg's pianoforte recording, so full in tone, so correct in scale-balance, and so free from *sostenuto* effect. The most wonderful examples of the year are *Etudes Symphoniques*, Parts V. and VI. (4s.) and *Valse Suite*, Coleridge-Taylor (4s.); PIANO FOX-TROT, *Tea for Two* (2s. 6d.); ARRANGEMENT, *Drink to me only* (2s. 6d.). Being curious to see what could be done in joint recording of the piano with other instruments, one day I tried over all those of Mr. Sternberg's own recording; I was more than delighted; the balance of the two parts is perfectly held, the piano recording is Homo. piano recording, and the recording of the solo instrument is as good as the recording of the piano. Unquestionably every collection should include both the half-crown flute and piano records, and the whole of the Pollak series of 4s. VIOLIN records with P.F. accompaniment. All these are so uniformly good it is impossible to make any selection from them.

IMPERIAL (63, Farringdon Road, E.C.).—The only well assorted list of 2s. records. The surface has improved during the year. The VIOLIN solos, the CORNET solos, and the BARIOTONE numbers sung in French and in Italian are, in my opinion, the best examples of these recordings.

ODEON (85, City Road).—An enormous list of good recordings. Group orders for the trade can be supplied at short notice.

PARLOPHONE.—I still put these ORCHESTRAL recordings, both light and heavy, quite at the top of the list. I have yet to hear any Jazz recordings to approach, as a group, those of Vincent Lopez. I think the three TANGO discs just recorded from performances in Buenos Aires, by correctly constituted bands, to be unique in local colour. Now this list is coming into great prominence for wonderfully *full-toned* SOPRANO recordings; they are not in the style of Galli-Curci's *Una Voce*, but to all musicians of catholic taste, they are equally valuable. *Senta's Ballad*, *Largo*, *Heidenröslein*, *Rosenkavalier*, *Lohengrin* (Heckmann-Bettendorf); *The Huguenots* (Fritzi Jokl), *Magic Flute* (Zinaida Jurjevskaja), and many others are entire successes.

POLYDOR (Alfred Imhof, New Oxford Street, W.C.).—Selections from this list made up as far as possible to fill deficiencies in British lists. No new GRAND ORGAN record has been produced this year, but the Polydor list contains a series of vigorous, well-balanced, clean recordings of a pipe organ without pedals that go as far as they can to make up the deficiency.

REGAL (Columbia House, Clerkenwell Road).—I think the VIOLIN solos by Manuella the best half-crown numbers on this list. I like no half-crown brass band records so well as these, the tone is light and clear, the recording is well-balanced and clean. And with all these records there is always the *noiseless* surface to be considered and the good wearing quality of the composition under *incorrect* playing conditions.

SCALA (City Road, E.C.).—A list of well selected miscellanea. Specially deserving of notice are the Tudor Davies TENOR solos and the 'cello solos. Look out for the two latest American dance numbers, *California Sweetheart*, WALTZ, and *Fooling*, FOX-TROT. All are 10-inch at 2/6 each.

VELVET FACE (1, Newton Street, Holborn Bars, W.C.).—A great concession to music lovers has been the reduction of prices in this list *throughout* to 4s. and 2s. 6d. Messrs. Hough deserve the strongest encouragement for this move. Every gramophonist should write for a list and should make selections from the Zacharewitsch VIOLIN numbers (*Gypsy Airs* is hard to beat) and from the SOPRANO records of Makushina (I have *Elegy*). Every lover of UNCOMMON RECORDS should possess both the exquisite oboe concerto numbers, the solo part played by Goossens, one at 4s. and one at 2s. 6d.

VICTOR (The Gramophone Exchange, New Oxford Street).—A most valuable list made up of badly needed masterpieces of music not recorded in this country. I have no vocal numbers, but I can say that the orchestral recording is exceptionally clean and distinct, if a little dry, and that the BRASS BAND recording as seen in the Conway's Band performance of *Finlandia* (5s. 3d.) is *magnificent* and so far as my experience of such records goes entirely unapproached.

VOCALION (Duncan Avenue, Gray's Inn Road).—The great reduction in prices of the celebrity records has met with a well deserved reward. I hold this list unique for the really life-like recording of Malcolm McEachern's BASSO PROFUNDO

voice. I have heard nothing else of the kind to compare with these. I have *The Mighty Deep*; when I play it it is generally encored, a rare compliment to a record of any sort.

WINNER (1, Newton Street, Holborn Bars, W.C.).—This popular half-crown list is so well known as to its ordinary numbers that I need say nothing about them, except to call attention to Mr. Fred Granger's excellent work, well recorded, in COMIC SONGS. Under the heading of UNCOMMON RECORDS, however, not so well known, I must mention the VOCAL QUARTET, *The Grace* (Laudi Spiritual), and the beautiful group of CYMBALON records, example, *Hungarian Fantasia*, all produced this year.

ZONOPHONE.—The surface, manufacture, and composition of these records are now greatly improved. The list remains unique for the beautiful VIOLIN AND MUSTEL ORGAN records of Elsie and Dorothy Southgate. The thoroughly good average of vocal recording is particularly notable in the case of the tenor voice, the *mezza-voce* not being smudged. Browning Mummery's popular songs are really nice work.

* * *

In closing my notes for the year I must thank the many thousands of readers of my book for the pressure they must have put on dealers in order to obtain the concessions to purity of design that have been made by manufacturers. By next autumn I quite anticipate that the revolution will have become so complete that I shall have to rewrite my book forgetting that there are any owners of bad gramophones, as far as may be, and to the special interest of owners of good ones.

H. T. BARNETT.

THE LIFEBELT

THE November number, in which the Editor's description of the Lifebelt appeared, is now out of print; but particulars for adjusting and using the Lifebelt are supplied with each one that is sent out. Emphasis must be laid on the fact that the Lifebelt is protected by patent, that it can only be obtained from the London Office of THE GRAMOPHONE, that it costs 5s. post free, and that applications should be accompanied by information as to the make of gramophone for which the Lifebelt is required.

The Editor asked for reports from readers, good or bad; and the first batch of Lifebelts sent out has elicited a large number of reports, but up to date no bad ones. The best way to show those people who have not tried a Lifebelt what it can do for them if they will trouble to get one is to print a few of these reports, and the following is a first selection:

(1) My machine is a Columbia Grafonola Small Table Grand (No. 19a). The Lifebelt you sent had a brass fitting for attaching to the tone-arm; this I found did not fit tight enough and I tried packing with paper to make it firm, but the result was disappointing. I tried a variety of records with it, but my wife and I could not discern any appreciable improvement, except in a few orchestral records, notably Holst's *Planet Suite*, in which the basses seemed a little clearer; in the majority of cases, however, the results were disappointing, but we were "buoyed" up by the thought that at

any rate the Lifebelt was saving the wear of our records considerably. On the 1st December when the December number of THE GRAMOPHONE arrived, we hastily scanned its pages for criticisms of other readers that might help us in discovering any fault we might be making. No result at first, and then I read Mr. Wilson's article on page 324, the last paragraph of which fetched me out of my easy chair with a bound, and ably supported by my wife, who backed me up in my resolve to take the risk of damaging the machine, we had the tone-arm off, put it in the workshop vice and with a hacksaw had the end of the tone-arm off, and the Lifebelt on again, tested it for needle-track alignment with Wilson's protractor, and trembling with excitement and fear that the result might be as indifferent as before or even worse, we put on a record. The result was magical and it was with difficulty that we could knock off and go to bed. The next evening we tried standing the machine on 2lb. jam jars, with even better results, and now it only remains for us to adopt Capt. Barnett's lead weight dodge to lighten the weight of the sound-box.—M. V. LE P. TRENCH, Lt.-Colonel.

(2) I duly received the Lifebelt on the 18th instant, and have given it a fairly extended trial on all sorts of records (except "cornet and grand piano, etc."), and in accordance with your request for reports from the pioneer users of this device, I send the following.

My remarks should perhaps be prefaced by this description of my gramophone, in order that my report may be of as much assistance as possible. The machine in question is a large mahogany table grand with all-wood Internal horn, straight metal tone-arm; the horn measures about 18in. by about 9in. at the orifice. Sound-boxes used were "Magnet" 2in. and "Exposition" with a few records played with a "Luxus"; fibre needles.

When, after a lot of trouble, I got the Lifebelt fitted and the sound-box attached, the metal ring was as far as it would go on the left, i.e., the tone-arm end, and the first trials were made with it in that position, which gave quite good results with orchestral records, but had quite an opposite effect on vocals—Florence

Austral, for instance, being transformed into a contralto. However subsequent experiments soon showed that by judicious management of the ring, this was easily put right.

My first impressions were that I was getting more volume, but I have since come to the conclusion that this is not so. I am now inclined to think that it is the added resonance and sonority produced by the Lifebelt—as to which there is no doubt whatever—that makes the machine sound louder. My machine was always considered both by myself and by those of my friends who have heard it, to be pretty good with orchestral and instrumental records, but there is no comparison between the results I used to get and those now obtained by the use of the Lifebelt. Just a few instances of records that have been improved out of all knowledge: The *Entry of the Gods* (H.M.V.); in the first part I get a most tremendous crash and roll of the drums, and in the second part the "Valhalla" motive comes through with a majesty of tone, and tonal truth and clarity that I never heard before.

The new *Parsifal* records, especially the Grail Scene, are immensely improved by the Lifebelt: in the second side the choral work comes out almost as if one was sitting in the concert room or theatre, whilst the basses are heard as they should be. Of course, I know these are splendid examples of the new recording process, but I played them on my gramophone with and without the Lifebelt, and the improvement in the reproduction was marked.

Piano records too are greatly improved; the piano rings out splendidly, the added resonance being particularly valuable in this case.

Chamber music is also very much better. I played through the whole of the H.M.V. records of the Beethoven Op. 59, and was particularly struck with the way in which the Lifebelt brought out all the parts in their proper proportion without affecting the balance—the viola parts in particular were beautifully clear and the 'cello also came out properly.

The Lifebelt has also made me change my mind about certain records. For example, some time ago I bought on speculation the Velvet Face records of German's *Welsh Rhapsody*, and was disappointed with them—in fact had consigned them to the scrap-heap. Played with the Lifebelt they sound entirely different and are now restored to their old place in the album. It will also show up bad records, and will reveal defects in those hitherto considered perfect. I think there can be no doubt that, as used to be said of a certain well-known sound-box, "what there is in the record will be brought out" and that our reproducing apparatus has hitherto not done justice to the recording.

There is another point also and that is that the use of the Lifebelt will have in some cases an enormous effect for the better in the way of needle-track alignment. My own machine was pretty good in this respect before, but it is now, as far as I can judge, as nearly exact as it possibly can be.

Of course, it is impossible to say that the improvement that has been effected on my machine will be as great on others, and I am not technician enough to offer any opinion as to why it should be so good. As a matter of fact, in view of the dictum of a real expert in THE GRAMOPHONE that fibre users would not derive so much improvement from the use of this device as would the users of steels, I did not expect to find anything like so much improvement as has actually been effected, and can only say that if steel users get much better results then they will indeed be worth hearing.—J. T. FISHER.

(3) My experience with the Lifebelt may be of interest to other owners of goose-neck tone-arms. My tone-arm was specially made for me, according to Mr. Wilson's formulæ for the correction of tracking error, and I use Mr. Virtz's sound-boxes and fibre needles. I fitted the Lifebelt as directed, and the results were certainly better, but not much. Then I received the December number of THE GRAMOPHONE and read Mr. Wilson's article in it. It required some resolution to cut my tone-arm, but at last I screwed up my courage and took off 1½ in., i.e., enough to bring back the sound-box into the position of correct alignment from which the extra length of the Lifebelt had removed it. One end of the Lifebelt comes now just to the beginning of the bend in the goose-neck, with half an inch of tube inside it.

The result was truly remarkable. My records are now new and wonderful discoveries, and this is true of all kinds. I have not sufficient musical knowledge to describe the various improvements, beyond saying that the volume of sound has been increased, there is greater resonance and brilliance, the balance is much better, the various instruments have a much more natural tone, which I suppose is the reason for the greatest improvement of all. What I may term the resolving power of the gramophone has been enormously increased, beyond anything I have heard elsewhere. Instruments and touches of colour have appeared in chamber

music and orchestral records that were not there before. One can hear what each instrument or family of instruments is doing in a way that hitherto has been quite impossible.

These are feeble words to describe the magical change that has been wrought by the Lifebelt.—F. H. GRENFEEL.

(4) A triumph. I have made exhaustive experiments with the Lifebelt, and the results are beyond all expectations; its amazing features are noticeable on all records.

My model is H.M.V. horizontal grand, with swell tone-arm and goose-neck, fitted with Lifebelt, Jewel sound-box and Seymour weight adjuster. I am a fibrist.

Readers interested in the Lifebelt must have some serious regard to alignment and weight. The Wilson Protractor is a necessity. I remedied the alignment defect by withdrawing the sound-box fitting from the Lifebelt, firmly attaching the fitting to the sound-box, then replacing the whole at a lateral angle which gave the best alignment.

The virtues of the Lifebelt are that its resilient qualities are not limited, it gives a wonderful sense of purity, resonance is amazing, all high notes of great volume hitherto shrill now perfect, and base work is a revelation. The Lifebelt's only drawback seems that by reason of its being an additional fitting, alignment correction presents difficulties.—FRANK P. MAGGE.

(5) Thank you for the Lifebelt received last week. On the day I received it I happened to be in conversation with a friend who has been in the gramophone trade for many years. I mentioned the Lifebelt and showed it to him. He smiled and passed some disparaging remarks, saying that that idea was tried by the big companies many years ago and discarded, that I should not find any improvement resulting from its use. This seemed rather encouraging. But I gave the Lifebelt a careful trial during the week-end on all kinds of records, new and old. As a result I have told my friend that he is wrong this time.

As I have a good gramophone to start with, H.M.V. Table Grand model (largest size), Exhibition No. 2 sound-box, I hardly expected such a very great improvement; but the improvement was really marked. Not only greater volume, but more resonance, notes in the lower register much improved (fibre needles used). By a little manipulation of the Lifebelt on the tone-arm, I have also secured proper alignment. I am, in fact, very pleased with the result.

I notice in the December GRAMOPHONE you advise the Lifebelt with Daws Clarke needle tension attachment. I had already discovered this, as I was previously using the attachment. I tried some records with the No. 2 sound-box by itself, and then with the Lifebelt and needle tension attachment and proper alignment, and the difference is really astounding. There is absolutely no comparison; and I can enthusiastically recommend this combination with fibre needles.—D. F. HEARD.

(6) As a professional musician and acoustical expert to one of our largest musical instrument makers I have long been at a loss to understand why all models of tone-arm at present obtainable are made without any elastic (rubber) medium incorporated.

I have for years considered it an essential to good reproduction, but have always been too busy to attack the problem myself, and have generally preferred to listen to my gramophone rather than experiment with it in my very few leisure moments.—B. MANTON-MYATT.

(7) My experience with the Lifebelt on my Sonora machine is that it increases resonance very much and makes the alignment with the Sonora, Luxor or Astra sound-boxes almost perfect.—G. R. HOLLIS.

(8) The machine is a large H.M.V. Table Grand with Exhibition box. . . . The tone was always good—likewise definition; but the Lifebelt has improved both of these by at least 25 per cent. in 24 records out of 25. I now hear words (even in French) where I only heard sounds. I can "hear the bass" better; brass is rounder and more mellow, and blast is accentuated, as you warned it would be. Needle-track alignment is nearly perfect now.—W. E. SIDE.

(9) A friend of mine lent me his Lifebelt and I was amazed by the improvement of my machine. I am sure it has doubled its value. . . . May I congratulate you on offering the wonderful Lifebelt to the public at so very reasonable a price.—H. A. SHAW.

(10) . . . I only started with it this morning and am still more convinced that an eight foot horn is unnecessary for the production of a big bass tone. I've not yet had time to try more than about fifteen records, but the Columbia *Adeste*, the Parlophone *Rhinegold* and the new Scotney . . . are all so wonderful that I do not hesitate to write and tell you that another of your grateful readers is a supporter and believer in the Lifebelt.—J. ANTHONY PIERSON.



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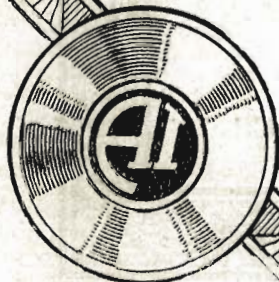
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MY METAGRAMMORPHOSIS

OR

THE BLIGHTER BIT

WHEN I was seven years old "it" came. Something wonderful from Santa Claus wrapped up in paper and with a thing like a Dunce's cap made of tin (only it had a gold band round the big end) standing on top. After much trembling excitement the unveiling was completed and the weird contraption called "phonograph" sat there in mute consciousness of its potential volubility. It looked quite as complicated as a wireless set, only I do not remember comparing it with one at that time (1903). The key was screwed on (it was a funny thing rather like one I had lost belonging to my clockwork engine, and I made a mental note about seeing if it would fit when the coast was clear). Next, the reproducer was somehow fitted; this was a little affair about the size of a Lilliputian elephant's foot, and about the same shape. Now, with that "something's going to happen" atmosphere, my uncle, who was the prime factor in this symposium, opened a mysterious box, which I had noticed had been under a chair for about two days, and which I had not been allowed to touch. The lid thrown back exposed what looked like rather big pill-boxes, only they had American flags on them and were much taller. They would have held more pills than I could have sucked the sugar off in quite two days. Now the top was waggled off and a puff of cotton-wool pulled out. What a funny smell too! Inside was a record for the phonograph. I felt as though the earth was standing still during this stupendous morning; but "Come on, Uncle, do put it on," and amidst pin-dropping silence he stuck two fingers and a thumb inside the pill-box and out came the record sticking to them. "Why do you hold it like that, Uncle?" elicited the information that the record was made of delicate wax, and the heat of the hand would damage the music if held by the outside, and further that I was not to attempt to handle them myself without permission. The record at last was applied to the machine, the key wound up, Dunce's cap stuck on, and reproducer lowered into place. Glistening eyes, quivering ears, and parted lips, when—"Stars and Stripes for ever. Played by the Home Guards Band. Edison-Bell record" piped out of the cap, and directly afterwards the sound of a band. This at once knocked my clockwork engine into a very remote siding, and "More! Uncle, more!" was the order of the day.

It was not long before a number of records accumulated and were stacked away all over the place. I well remember that a bassinet (or perambulator—I never know the difference) was

impressed into service; it stood in the hall, and all over it were these pill-boxes of records, even on top of the hood.

One day the musical side of the family were congregated round the phonograph, making some vocal quartet records on wax blanks (we were doing our own recording now—at least, I wasn't; I left that to those who knew more about it than I did), when from the hall a terrific row like a lot of "crumps" going off, stopped the quartet and flung the door open all in one breath, and didn't we behold a sorry spectacle! It seared itself on my memory, and I can hear that crash to-day. The bassinet wasn't strictly in its place, neither were the records; the whole hall was strewn with pieces of wax record and pill-boxes, some with lids on, some with no lids. Incidentally my sister was sitting on the floor crying, and trying to explain how it all happened by itself, but my chief concern during her cross-examination was to see if any of my favourites had survived. Some had—and some hadn't; but my *crème de la crème*, *Honey Bell*, a pretty little minuet, was a 50 per cent. casualty. We never got another of this record, and ever afterwards I used to play it as far as the broken portion would allow.

I was fourteen when the next milestone was erected. A gorgeous thing called "Zonophone" with a convolvulus shaped horn was brought into the home, together with a pile of disc records, and of these I remember my favourites were *Poppies and Wheat*, by Olly Oakley, and *The Broken Melody*, by Van Biene. (I ground some needles up with these two records.) Very shortly the household generally lost interest in the machine, so I gave it a coat of aluminium paint, and began to scheme out how I could raise some records of my very own. At school I met another boy who had the makings of a gramomaniac in him, and we very quickly advanced to the "Oh! Have you got so-and-so?" stage. The upshot was that we exchanged about a dozen records during the holidays, and we arranged to keep one each out of the dozen when we came back to school. I chose a beautiful Odeon record of the *Barcarolle* and another excerpt from the *Tales of Hoffmann* on the reverse side. It was played by an orchestra that really was an orchestra as I understood it, and not a mere band. I had one particularly anxious moment when I was questioned as to why I had not returned it, though, of course, I got over it all right.

For a nimble sixpence (money always did appear nimble to me) I secured from another boy a beautiful band record of Gounod's *Faust Ballet Music*. I was not too sure for about three or four

playings that perhaps I ought to have bought ice-cream soda instead; then I settled down and found that I actually got to like it better the more I heard it.

As Rugby was the only study that engrossed me at school, I was filched away and thrust right into an office when seventeen. Anyhow, I could now smoke a cigarette without having to hide my head-gear, and could buy myself a record now and again to boot. Every Sunday morning I hastened down the pier, taking a seat in the open-sided pavilion at the nethermost pierhead (piers, like dragons, seem to possess two heads), and punctually at 11 o'clock the White Viennese Band, under the conductor's able baton, "kicked off." I sat there with a pencil and a programme, ticking off the pieces I would like a record of, and often I was the only audience in the pavilion—the noisy hand-clapping crowd sat outside in the sunshine, really more intent on flashing sunshades and watching the squeaky-boot parade getting an appetite for the midday dinner.

My great trouble sometimes took place when I arrived at the gramophone shop the following week with every item in the programme ticked off, a poverty-stricken memory, and a paucity of cash. Later on I used to double and treble the ticks to denote order of preference, but this proved a very vicious circle and landed me in some horrible minor mix-ups. One thing stands out very clearly, and that was the Odeon catalogue. Odeon nearly always seemed to have recorded the very title I was after (and by an orchestra that really was an orchestra, and not a band masquerading as one). Their *Merry Wives of Windsor Overture* was the only record of this piece I have heard, either before or since the war, in which the tympani was in evidence with its four dramatic beats in the *andante moderato* movement.

Then came the war, and I did not see or hear a gramophone until May, 1915. I was billeted under a tree in a wood named "Scottish," about one and a half miles behind the front line at St. Eloi. Here we had a Decca, the first I had seen or heard, and which I was told was made of real cowhide. The selection of records was musically poor; we had such stuff as "Which switch is the right switch for Ipswich, Miss? You've switched my switch on the wrong wire." Anyhow, it speaks well for the combination that I can quote the words. The fact that we were shelled out of the wood later on was not, I feel sure, a reflection on our music.

I only heard this machine once again; it was in the sergeants' tent, and the sergeants had just got back from "Pop." Our bagpipes were playing "Lights Out" at the time, so I kept away.

I received a real blow over the heart when our C.O. dumped the two mess portables into a shell-hole in order to lighten the limbers. This was all through the Germans breaking through our break-

through at Cambrai. Later, in a field hospital, I heard some beautiful records of which I made mental note that if I came through I would have them in my collection. Eight months later I was "invalided out" and went straight to Selfridge's and bought £25 worth. I purchased from the catalogue without hearing, and almost the whole lot were orchestral records of operatic music, and which satisfied me for some years until I dropped on to Haydn's *Quartet in E flat* by the English String Quartette on Columbia Dark Blue. This opened up a vista without a horizon, and I am now dashing about for "finds" in any string quartet I can get, *and a fig for operatic music to-day*.

My metamorphosis is so complete that I would not cross the road to hear any singer, any opera, any orchestra or band, or string quartet, so long as I could hear the same things by means of my treasured gramophone. My recorded musical horizon to-day is as beautiful as a rainbow, and just as far off, however close I get up to it. *Whither now, I pray thee, good sir?* "CRUMP."



Misette.

"F Sharp" first drew attention to the dance music of Signor Strumillo (who directs the music at the Quisisana Hotel at Capri) in an article on *Il Fox* last March; and proclaimed *Misette* "the best waltz I have heard for a long time." Fired by the desire to add to the gaiety and comity of Anglo-Italian relations, we introduced some of Signor Strumillo's compositions to Mr. Vincent Lopez, who took them off to Paris and New York to play and—we hope—to record. Meanwhile, two of them, *Misette*, a waltz, and *La Sirène*, a fox trot, are published for us by Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb at 2s. each, and we venture to think that it will not be long before they come back to us on records for review, and perhaps on the Frith Street barrel organ. Let those of our dancing readers who wish always to anticipate the popular tunes take note!

Binding.

Last year the January number ended on page 311; this year on page 398. Those who keep current numbers in the spring-back binding-cases will find that they will have to start a fresh one with this number. The outlay is not great and it is prudent. Write at once, before our stock of them is exhausted.

A Royal Record.

The Prince of Wales's record on Sportsmanship, issued by H.M.V. in September, 1924, has been so successful that profits amounting to £1545 up to June 30th, 1925, have been given to the British Legion. This makes one think.

DANCE RECORDS IN RETROSPECT

By RICHARD HERBERT

IF we look back at what has happened in the dancing world during 1925 we cannot help being impressed by two developments in particular. The first, which has two sides to it, I spoke of at some length in my "Dance Notes" last month: the abortive attempt to introduce a "new" dance, the Charleston—for people are most obstinate in calling it "new"—and the tardy and apparently not very successful revival of the tango. The Charleston has suffered a fate rather similar to that of the tango when it made its first appearance in England; and that fate has been equally well deserved because too much stress has been laid upon the Charleston's eccentricities, culminating now in the "ankle shimmy". The strange fortune of the tango is more curious and more difficult to explain, and I will not make another attempt to solve what seems to be insoluble. The other recent phenomenon in the dancing heavens has resulted from the quite extraordinary success of a succession of musical comedies which have descended upon London from the provinces and from America—chiefly from America. These "shows," *No, No, Nanette*, *Rose Marie*, *Tell me more*, *On with the Dance*, *Mercenary Mary*, and the rest, are all very well as musical comedies, to be seen and listened to in the theatre, but as tyrants of the ballroom floor their influence should be heartily resented. One cannot help wondering what would have been the dancer's fare, so far as music is concerned, if these musical comedies had not made their overwhelming appearance. Just before this latest furore there had appeared symptoms of the development of a new attitude towards syncopated music. We all remember the professedly serious concerts at the Queen's Hall and we still play George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. At that time the wiseacres might have foretold attempts, revolutionary and ambitious, to develop syncopation on more serious lines. But this development was not to be so soon.

We are not such ignoramuses as to pretend that syncopation is a novelty; on the other hand, we disagree quite reasonably with those who say that it has no future apart from its use for purposes for which it has been employed in the past. Up to the present, however, our hopes for better dance music have not been fulfilled, and, worse than that, we are now in a rut which promises to engulf us. Dance music is in the thralldom of the musical comedy song; a worse thralldom it is difficult to imagine, not so much because it is alien, but chiefly

on account of the miserable degradation of the words of the so-called "lyrics". But this is not the final and irrefutable argument against the comic song; there is one far stronger, and that is that, so long as repetitive choruses are included, dance music is condemned to monotony. As music with the words omitted the wretched thing is formless and without meaning; as song it is miserably mawkish sentiment for the most part, and for purposes of dancing usually song badly sung. Whichever way the thing is treated one cannot avoid the hideous reality. If the words are sung it is impossible to escape them; if they are omitted one cannot escape their echo and the inevitable monotony of the absent chorus. The more the pity because we are not destitute of competent and even original composers, who are deserving, in the first place, of better words, and in the second, capable of more praiseworthy achievement.

That is the criticism which has been uppermost in my mind during the last few months. My hatred of muted trumpets, and other instruments misused, has been eclipsed rather than abated, although I think there has been a very considerable improvement among many of the bands in this respect, and stridency is almost forgotten as an evil when compared with the nasal possibilities of the human voice. So much for the tunes. From the purely mechanical point of view improvement is far above the most generous expectations. Not only have we at our command a far greater volume of sound—a very important matter from the dancer's point of view—as a result of the new recording, and marvelously improved definition, but we have now a new gramophone which puts most of its predecessors quite into the shade. The old argument against the use of the gramophone as an accompaniment for dancing has lost its point. Indeed, I am prepared to say that, if listened to from the next room, it would be quite excusable to mistake the gramophone for the real thing.

The records sent for review month by month continue to increase in number, much to the dismay of the poor reviewer, who now has to tackle Homochords, Actuelles, and Duophones, as well as all the other makes with which we are familiar, and that number shows every sign of increasing in the near future. This is only to be expected when one realises how much more useful to the dancer the gramophone now is than it used to be. The list of best records is made as small as it is reasonably possible to make it without being unfairly critical. But to

select such a small number from so many is an invidious task in any circumstances.

One word more before the list and a general plea for indulgence. Readers must remember that it is possible only to make one's *personal* choice and to hope for the most extensive possible agreement for that. But even the making of a choice for one's self is no easy matter when one has to choose from something like seven hundred recorded tunes. There are bound to be omissions, and omissions, maybe, of some of those records which one had the best intentions to include. Another point of importance is that records of which one of the tunes is good and the other poor are entirely excluded in favour of those which are better all round.

In making the list of those which I sincerely suppose to be the best of the records, and not merely the best of particular dances or particular tunes, I find, rather sadly, that I have listed few examples of the cheaper priced makes, and that the Charleston and the Blues are not represented at all. Whether or not I am right in regarding the two latter dances as to all intents and purposes dead, it is, of course, impossible for *me* to say; so, for those devotees of either dance, if there happen to be any, who may be disappointed if no individual record is mentioned at all, I will chronicle the records which have struck me as being least bad. Col. 3717, *Sweet Georgia Brown* (Charleston) (Denza Dance Band) and H.M.V., B.2076, *Charleston* (and *Waitin' for the Moon*, fox-trot) (Savoy Orpheans). The best—in fact, one might almost say the only—new blues are to be found on the Brunswick records: 2795, *Beale Street Blues* and *Maple leaf rag* (Herb Wiedoeft's Cinderella Roof Orchestra) and any of the tunes played by the Mound City Blue Blowers. The Blue Blowers make the most amazing and excruciating noises, suggesting that they are in the very depths of them, but they certainly play with good rhythm, and are sometimes really very amusing. For the poor in purse, but by no means poor in spirit, if I may judge by myself, I will mention one or two cheaper records which are sound value for the money, although hardly within the category of the very best. For tangos there is Zono. 2639, *Mirala come se va* and *Mano Santa* (Manuel Pizarro's Argentine Orchestra); for waltzes, Duophone B.5092, *You told me you loved me* and *When you and I were seventeen* (Colonnade Dance Orchestra)—but remember Vincent Lopez's record of *Seventeen* and remember also that 10in. Parlophones are only half-a-crown—; for fox-trots, Imperial 1479, *Temple Bells* and *Kashmiri* (Greening's Dance Orchestra)—being the only record with both tunes on one record and a very admirable record at that—, and Beltona 826, *My blushing rose* and *Lady of my Cigarette* (Virginia Dance Orchestra), the second being the best record of the tune, which is a good one.

In the list which follows no attempt is made at an

order of merit; so dancers are left to choose for themselves guided only by *their own* predilections in this narrow range of *mine*.

Tangos

- Voc. X.9613.—LE TANGO DU RÊVE and CANTA IL GRILLO (Moschetto and his Orchestra). The first is a perfect gem; but the second tune is not suitable for dancing.
H.M.V. B.2136.—EL PANUELITO and HASTA LA RUELTA (Varaldi's Tango Band).
H.M.V. B.2135.—JULIAN and SENTIMIENTO GAUCHO (Varaldi's Tango Band). *Sentimiento Gaucho* is the tune which won the first prize in competition at the Teatro Grand Splendid in Buenos Aires.
PARLO. E.10379 (12in.).—PAJARITO and JUEVES (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra).
PARLO. E.10380 (12in.).—MELODIE DU RÊVE and LE LYS NOIR (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra).
PARLO. R.3201.—AQUELLA NOCHE and TIERRA MIA (played and recorded in the Argentine by the Orquesta Tipica, conducted by Roberto Firpo).

Waltzes

- H.M.V. B.2066.—MIDNIGHT WALTZ and "DER ROSENKAVALIER" (Savoy Havana Band).
COL. 9056 (12in.).—MOONLIGHT ON THE ALSTER and ON THE BEAUTIFUL GREEN NARENDA (Geiger Viennese Dance Orchestra).
PARLO. E.5393.—ARTIST'S LIFE and ROSES OF THE SOUTH (Edith Lorand Orchestra).
PARLO. E.10358 (12in.).—VIENNESE LIFE WALTZ and NACHFALTER WALTZ (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra).
PARLO. E.10381 (12in.).—KAISER WALTZ, PARTS 1 AND 2 (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra).
PARLO. E.5489.—WHERE ARE YOU TO-NIGHT? and SOMETIME (Edith Lorand Orchestra).

Fox-trots

- BRUN. 2828.—HUNGARIA and EGYPTIAN ECHOES (Rhythmodic Orchestra). Really medleys of folk and popular tunes, but they play as if of quite a different kind.
Voc. X.9640.—MERCENARY MARY (Geoffrey Goodhart and his Orchestra) and HONEY, I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU (The Ambassadors). Both from *Mercenary Mary*.
COL. 3761.—TIE A STRING AROUND YOUR FINGER and I'M A LITTLE BIT FONDER OF YOU (Percival Mackey's Band). Both from *Mercenary Mary*.
COL. 3694.—KICKIN' THE CLOUDS AWAY and WHY DO I LOVE YOU? (Denza Dance Band). Both from *Tell me more*.
H.M.V. B.2039.—ALL ABOARD FOR HEAVEN and LET IT RAIN, LET IT POUR (Meyer Davis and his Le Paradis Band).
H.M.V. B.2175.—MANHATTAN and RHYTHM RAG (Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra).

One-steps

- H.M.V. B.2103.—SEA SONGS MEDLEY and *Why couldn't it be poor little me?* (fox-trot) (Savoy Orpheans).
PARLO. E.10359 (12in.).—ABDULLA and *Come and dance with me* (fox-trot) (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra).

N.B.—All records are 10in. unless otherwise described. The abbreviations of makers' names are obvious. The prices of the listed records and of those mentioned in the article are as follows :—Aco: 10in., 2s. 6d. Actuelle: 10in., 2s. 6d. Brunswick: 10in., 3s. Columbia: 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 3s. Duophone: 10in., 2s. 6d. H.M.V.: 10in., 3s. Homochord: 10in., 2s. 6d. Imperial: 10in., 2s.; Parlophone: 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d. Vocalion: 10in., 3s. Zonophone: 10in., 2s. 6d.

Read FAIRY GOLD

By COMPTON MACKENZIE

IN THE

Evening Standard.

ENGLISH FOLK DANCES

By N. O. M. CAMERON

MANY people while looking up records will have come across a little group of folk dances, and, if they thought about them at all, most likely had a hazy vision of a maypole with ribbons or of queer females rather vaguely clad, with fillets in their hair. I do not know the origin of this belief that we wear hardly any clothes, but people are often quite surprised—and occasionally, I am afraid, disappointed—to learn that we keep on our trousers. Nor is there any explanation of the ribbons on the maypole, a comparatively new-fangled and quite untraditional notion. It is also necessary to point out that the photograph in the H.M.V. Educational Catalogue is misleading. The record being played on the machine there shown may be a folk-dance record, but that is all.

We owe our knowledge of English folk dances to Cecil Sharp. In this field he was the one commanding figure. He first saw a Morris dance (*Country Gardens*) on Boxing Day, 1899, at Headington. Previously he had taken no particular interest in dancing, but he at once realised that here was something worthy of quite as much attention as folk-song. In 1911 he founded the English Folk Dance Society, which, including its branches, now has a membership of over 6,500. In addition to these, a very great number have been and are attending its classes. The Society and its branches hold these classes regularly throughout the year, and also vacation schools, a week at Easter, three weeks in August, and a week at Christmas. This last is always held at the Chelsea Polytechnic. Now it is a curious thing that though two of the three kinds of folk dance are for men only, and the third for both sexes in equal proportion, men are in a deplorable minority among the members. However, we are trying very hard to remedy this deficiency. The masculinity of folk dances makes them a very suitable subject for this review, which we are given to understand is neglected by the other sex.

The three kinds of folk dance are sword, Morris, and country. All had their origins in religious rites, in which mimetic ritual and sacrificial killing were of great importance. But a digression into the wider subject of folklore will probably be ruled out of order. Taking the sword dance first, as it seems to be the oldest form of the three, it is necessary to explain that it is not like the Scottish one, but is a team dance for several men, each holding a sword and grasping the point of his neighbour's in his other hand. Thus linked they go through a number of complicated and, to the spectator, bewildering evolutions. At the end of the dance, or in some at the end of each figure,

they make the "lock" by interlacing their swords tightly, so that the whole set can be held aloft by the leader. Someone else then enters and kneels down in the centre, the lock is put round his neck, the swords are drawn and the victim falls "dead." Five men form a team in Durham and Northumberland, where short and very flexible swords known as "rappers" are used, and six or eight in Yorkshire, where the swords are of more normal pattern.

The Morris dance is supposed to have been derived from the sword dance through the men separating and carrying a stick or a pair of handkerchiefs instead of a sword. Bells,* the sound of which coming just after the beat is a characteristic feature of the Morris, are worn, tied on each leg below the knee with coloured ribbons. Morris dancers are so-called because it was part of the ritual to be disguised. Part of this disguise was blackening the face. If we now see men with their faces blacked we call them niggers, but formerly the generic name for a black man was Morisco or Moor. Morris dances are worth seeing but the pleasure and exhilaration of actually doing them is unsurpassed. They consist of fairly easy figures, but the steps, capers, etc., are often difficult and require a good deal of energy, as well as a sense of rhythm. A Morris team, except in a few cases, consists of six men, but there are also a few Morris jigs, sometimes performed by two, but usually more effective as solos. Among them is found the English form of the Scottish sword dance, under the name of *Bacca Pipes*, in which two churchwarden pipes are laid crosswise on the ground.

Both these types are spectacular dances for picked teams. The country dance is the social dance for both sexes, though it happens to be worth seeing as well. It differs from the Morris in having, one might almost say, no steps at all. The dance is made up of figures, often elaborate, but a beginner can quickly reach a stage where he will be able to enjoy himself thoroughly.

The most important part of any dance is the music. Morris and country dances, and to a slightly less extent sword dances, fit their tunes like a glove. The traditional instrument of the Morris men used to be the pipe and tabor, of which it would be interesting to have a record.† The pipe, or whittle, has three holes and is played with the fingers of the left hand; over the left wrist is hung a small drum, the tabor (pronounced "tabber") or dub, which the player strikes with a stick held in his

*Cf. *King Henry VI.*, Part 2, iii. 1. 365.

†There are a number of records of Scottish and Irish pipes, but why are there none of the Northumbrian pipes, still in use in the north of England?

right hand. The death of the pipe-and-tabor player has often brought about the disbandment of a Morris "side," as a team is called. In other cases it has been superseded by the fiddle or concertina. Various instruments are used for sword dances, such as the fiddle, concertina or tin whistle. In the case of country dances it is difficult to give information, as Cecil Sharp collected very few actual survivals. Fortunately, however, owing to their popularity with all classes, including the court, many were put into print. The earliest and most valuable collection is Playford's *English Dancing Master*, first published in 1651, which reached its seventeenth edition in 1728. From it Sharp has taken 159 dances, although the interpretation of Playford's directions was often extremely difficult.

Coming at last to the records, these are in three groups: "A," played by Prince's Band, on p. 95 of the current Columbia catalogue, "B," under Victor Military Band, and "C," under Black Diamonds Band, both H.M.V. I think I am right in saying that both the first two groups were recorded in America, where there is a rule that no one may conduct who is not a member of the conductors' association. Consequently, Sharp had to try to "conduct the conductor," so to speak, in which he seems to have been fairly successful. The Columbia records used to be obtainable only from the Society, and most of mine date from that period. One record formerly issued by the E.F.D.S., a 12in. d.s., of two Yorkshire sword dances, *Flamborough* and *Kirkby Malzeard*, is not in the Columbia list. There is a 10in. of these in group "B," but I doubt if even the 12in. record would last long enough. The pause while the record was re-started, even by means of an automatic device, would be a serious drawback. As I have never heard the Columbia version, I am afraid I cannot compare the two, but the H.M.V. is not very satisfactory. *Kirkby* is very jerky, and *Flamborough*, a fine tune in reality, does not carry one away as it ought. *Kirkby* was the first sword dance Cecil Sharp collected. It is not so difficult to learn as some, but one requires to know it thoroughly before tackling others. *Flamborough* is rather different from others: the swords, of wood, are held in the left hand, and the dance is performed at a great pace with a skipping step throughout.

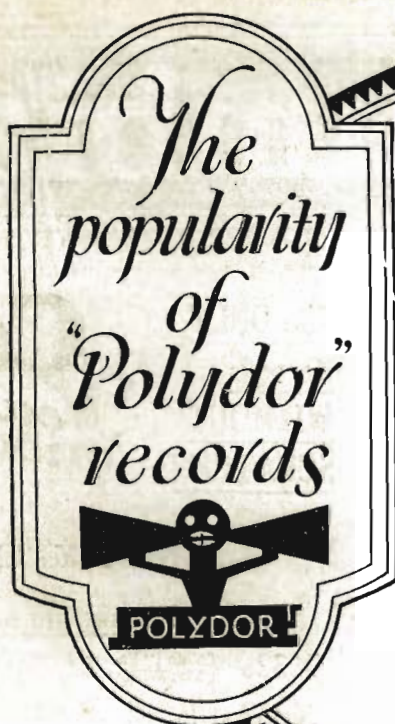
Morris dances are meagrely represented, but *Blue-Eyed Stranger* and *Rigs o' Marlow* is good, except that it is one of those tantalising "shaving-mirror" records. Then there are two jigs, *Jockie to the Fair* and *Old Mother Oxford*, recorded for two dancers. This simply means they dance one at a time; No. 1 does the first part, then No. 2 does the same; then No. 1 does the second part, and so on. It would have been much better to have recorded them as solos, and to have given us two more tunes in the space thus saved. All these

four are of the Headington tradition and are generally the first of their kind that the beginner learns. There are also two processional, the *Helston Furry Dance* (we will not stop to speculate on the derivation of "Furry"), and *Tideswell*. *Helston* is quite nice, but for the benefit of folk dancers it is as well to warn them that the "once-to-yourself" has been omitted in both of these. In *Tideswell*, which is excellent practice when trying to acquire the elements of the Morris step, there is a variation at the end of every other "B" music which is not quite in the right rhythm. The rest is quite adequate.

Of country dances,* however, there is quite a good selection. The number of people in a set may be four, six, eight, or "as many as will," and the set may be round or longways. A "longways for as many as will" does not have a fixed length like the others, but repeats the same figure *ad lib.*, or in the case of a record as often as space allows. The six on 12in. records and *Row well ye Mariners*, *Three Meet*, and *The Butterfly* are all of this type and doubtless seem monotonous if one is not dancing to them. Anyone who simply wants to hear the tunes should not play the record to the end. I think *Row well* and *Three Meet* (Col. 3253) and *Brighton Camp* and *The Ribbon Dance* (H.M.V. C.1072) are the best pairs as far as the gramophone is concerned. *Mary and Dorothy* is a dull dance (in my opinion); *Haste to the Wedding* is a good one, but I do not like the way the fifth bar in the "B" music comes out.

As a general rule group "A" are better than group "B," but in "C" the Black Diamonds Band was conducted by Cecil Sharp himself, and he was pleased with the results. *The Old Mole* (longways for six) is not good in either recording—a great pity, as it is one of the best of all country dances—a little slow and lacking the touch of the master on Col. 3257, and "jiggy" on H.M.V. B.1192. In *Hunsdon House* (square for eight) the "A" music is very nice but the "B" music too quick on Col. 3257; H.M.V. B.1194 is all right for speed. *Gathering Peascods* (a round nominally for as many as will but best for twelve) is a maypole dance with the maypole no longer there, the hand-clapping in the centre substituted for touching the maypole. I prefer Col. 3255, although mine is a horrid swinger; the H.M.V. version strikes me as "churchy." For *Sellenger's Round* (for as many as will) Cecil Sharp uses, not the identical tune given by Playford, but Byrd's arrangement of it. Again I prefer the Columbia rendering of this, though a little slow, and of *Rufy-Tufy* (for four), *Parson's Farewell* (for four), and *If All the World were Paper* (round for eight). *Magie on a Cree* (round for eight)

*The Scottish Country Dance Society, started in 1923, has had the enterprise to make records of all the dances in the two books published up to now. But I do not possess and have not heard any of these.



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on Col. 3255 is imperfect, wanting two repeats, a serious matter in a dance of a fixed length. *Goddesses* (longways for eight) and *Jenny Pluck Pears* (round for six) in group "B," and *The Black Nag* (longways for six), *Hey Boys up go we—not "up we go"*—(for four), *Newcastle* (round for eight), and *Heartsease* (for four) are all good dances and satisfactory records. As I said before, Cecil Sharp was pleased with group "C," so no commendation from me is necessary. *Argeers* (for four) is my favourite, excellently recorded. *Confess* is for two men and four women, the only formation of this kind in Playford. *The Lady in the Dark* is for four, *Picking up Sticks*, *Scotch Cap*, and *The Boatman* longways for six, *Chelsea Reach* and *Oranges and Lemons* squares for eight, and *Broom, the Bonny, Bonny Broom* longways for eight.

Two errors in labelling need correction. *Parson's Farewell* is played before *If All the World were Paper* on Col. 3256, and similarly *Hey Boys* before *Mage on a Cree* on Col. 3255.

Though there are no records made of actual portions of *At the Boar's Head*, the following recorded tunes were used by Holst: *Gathering Peascods*, *Ruffy-Tuffy*, *Row well ye Mariners*, *The Boatman*, *Hunsdon House*, *Heartsease*, *The Lady in the Dark* and *The Black Nag*. The tune used by Vaughan Williams for the entry of the Morris men (beginning of D.923, obverse) in *Hugh the Drover* is the *Winster Processional*. In the piano score it is marked "on the pipe and tabor," but I very much doubt if it was so played in actual performance. Holst's *Second Suite for Military Band in F*, recorded by at least three companies, begins with *Glorishears*, a Bampton (Oxfordshire) Morris dance, but at express speed, which to my mind is a pity, and ends most effectively with *Dargason*, a country dance from Playford. Mrs. Gordon Woodhouse plays three folk dances on the harpsichord, H.M.V. E.203, *Newcastle*, already mentioned, *Heddon of Fawsley* and *Step Back*, two Morris tunes. There is, however, an objection to folk tunes on the harpsichord, an archaic instrument and one that suggests the drawing-room rather than the open air. The "Morris" dances in *Henry VIII.* and *Tom Jones* are not real Morris tunes but original compositions by Edward German, and I cannot recognise any tunes I know in Quilter's *Three English Dances* (Voc. X.9515, X.9516). Percy Grainger's *Mock Morris* (Aco. G.15485 or Voc. X.9516), however, has the spirit of a Morris about it, and his *Shepherds' Hey* is constructed out of a genuine tune. But here again the tune is played very much faster than its original, robbing it of some of its beauty. A Morris dance requires no enlivening. More than once I have suspected Handel of "lifting" a folk dance tune, such as *Mr. Beveridge's Maggot** in the fourth movement of

Sonata No. 8 (Voc. D.02023), but people sometimes differ from me in these cases. There are several folk-dance tunes in *The Beggar's Opera*, e.g., *The Modes of the Court* or *Lilliburlero*, a country dance in Playford; *Cease your funning* or *Constant Billy*, a favourite Morris tune, and *Before the barn-door crowing* or *The Friar and the Nun*, a Playford country dance. In *Polly* there are *When a woman jealous grows* or *Christchurch Bells*, from Playford, not a folk tune but a catch composed by Henry Aldrich (1647–1710, Dean of Christ Church, Oxon.), and *The world is always jarring* or *Hunt the Squirrel*, a tune which Cecil Sharp transferred to the figures of *The Geud Man of Ballangigh*, as they then made a better dance than either as it stood in Playford.

As there are a fair number of country-dance records one need not beg for more immediately, though I personally should rather like to have *Dull Sir John*, *Catching of Quails*, *The Phoenix*, and *The Maid in the Moon*, but I would give worlds (though I hope I shall not have to) for some more Morris, for instance, *Getting Upstairs* and *Double Set Back* (from Headington, Oxon.), *Lads a Bunchum* and *The Black Joke* (Adderbury, Oxon.), *The Flowers of Edinburgh* and *Shepherds' Hey* (Bampton, Oxon.), *The Old Woman Tossed up in a Blanket* and *Constant Billy* (Sherborne, Glos.), *London Pride* and *Swaggering Boney* (Longborough, Glos.), *Banks of the Dee* and *Dearest Dicky* (Field Town, Oxon.), *Trunkles* and *William and Nancy* (Bledington, Glos.), *The Queen's Delight* and *Room for the Cuckoo* (Bucknell, Oxon.), and one or two jigs, say *Ladies' Pleasure* (Bledington), *None so Pretty* (Field Town) and *I'll Go and Enlist for a Sailor* (Sherborne), with one of the versions of *Princess Royal*, if there is room. Arranging practices and shows causes one sufficient worry, but the search for a musician almost turns one's hair white every time, and when he is found he is usually a pianist. The piano is not really a good instrument for folk dances, and as it is even less portable than a "cabinet grand de luxe," we have to take the one provided as we find it. Gramophone records, of course, have their drawbacks, but the dancers would be relieved of much anxiety.

Since reading the proof of this article, I hear that some more folk-dance records are to be made by H.M.V., among them eight Morris tunes. The latter are chosen from only three traditions, and are evidently intended for learners in fairly easy stages, but even so one will be thankful for them. The list as a whole contains a number of beautiful tunes, interesting for their own sake apart from the dances: and if there were an adequate selection of Morris dance records, we could give a complete demonstration of all types to the staff and readers of THE GRAMOPHONE, who would get far more enjoyment than from reading this article. N. O. M. CAMERON.

Note.—I have to thank Messrs. Alfred Imhof for allowing me to hear the records I did not actually possess.

*A tune which I have just learnt is ascribed to Purcell.

ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

IX.—Open Letter to The Editor

By P. WILSON

ON page 304 you invite your "forensic readers" to write an essay on the problem raised by the new H.M.V. machine. Whether the description suits me I do not know, but at the risk of being classed among the Victorian "What-nots" I would like to say a few words upon the subject.

As you state it, the problem is: "How can the orchestral reproduction be pure and the vocal reproduction impure?" I gather that what has attracted you in the orchestral reproduction is the balance between different instruments and the sensation of power which they convey; the sort of sensation which makes one catch one's breath. Gramophone reproduction has hitherto been commonly lacking in that quality. The small sound-boxes have given us a close approximation to instrumental tone-quality but few of them have conveyed the impression of instrumental power. The large sound-boxes have sacrificed tone-quality in an attempt to convey power, but the result has been merely a hollow fake. Some of the new H.M.V. machines do give the right sort of sensation of power and do convey a broad impression of a larger number of instruments. In that respect one must recognise that the Gramophone Company have made a definite achievement. But that achievement has not been made without loss. A letter which I have received from one of your readers sums up the position neatly and concisely: The new H.M.V. machine "is quite wonderful in a way but, though I do like to hear the deeper notes and the drums, I want to hear the violins *as* violins, not clarinets, the clarinets *as* clarinets, not a cross between an oboe and a cor anglais, and the oboe like the real thing and not like what I imagine the progeny of an oboe mated with a muted trumpet would sound like."

The complaint, then, is not so much that the orchestral definition is blurred as that it is a masquerade. The instruments of the orchestra are not really indistinct but they are not *the* instruments of any orchestra. The position is much the same with vocal records. McCormack is still a tenor and Galli-Curci is still a soprano but they are not like themselves. McCormack, as you say, is turned into a Tamagno; Galli-Curci becomes very deep-chested.

These features admit of a simple theoretical explanation. They indicate that, though the reaction of the No. 4 to grave and medium pitches

is fairly consistent and regular, it falls away substantially over the upper register, with the result that the *higher* overtones are suppressed or minimised. In a recent issue of *The Observer*, Prof. G. W. O. Howe has given some interesting figures concerning musical reproduction. He remarks that orchestral music requires the truthful reproduction of sound-waves covering the range from about 30 to about 20,000 vibrations per second. "Very careful experiments have shown that by filtering out and eliminating all vibrations slower than 500 per second one removes 60 per cent. of the energy, but only reduces the articulation, that is the intelligibility, by about 2 per cent. On the other hand, elimination of everything above 1,500 vibrations per second only removes 10 per cent. of the speech energy but reduces the articulation by 35 per cent." Other interesting figures are given by Dr. Harvey Fletcher in *The Physical Review*, 1924, xxiii., No. 3, where it is shown that the fundamental and a large number of harmonics can be eliminated from a compound note without changing the pitch of the note.

I understand that the B.B.C. engineers have now produced a microphone which reacts almost equally to pitches between 60 vibrations per second and about 5,000 vibrations per second. This is the best that can yet be done and it will be seen from the figures given above that it is not nearly good enough to give perfect orchestral reproduction. It will give most of the *energy* of all notes and most of the quality of the *lowest* notes, but the higher notes from stringed instruments or from such instruments as the oboe, clarinet, and cor anglais will be reproduced out of their true character.

From observations which I have made I should say that the new H.M.V. instrument begins to fall off at a frequency of about 1,500 vibrations per second. The greater part of the energy is there but the "articulation" is inadequate. In this respect the No. 4 is at the other extreme from what you, Sir, have hitherto termed "realistic" reproduction. There the aim has been to preserve the higher frequencies and so maintain tonal quality, even at the expense of reducing lower frequencies with a consequent loss of energy. Some day we may be able to get both but the time is not yet. In the meantime one has to choose between energy and timbre, and for my part I unhesitatingly choose the latter.

P. WILSON.

CREDE EXPERTO

A Current Survey of Gramophone Progress

By THE EXPERT COMMITTEE

V.—THE NEW H.M.V. GRAMOPHONES.

“IF the diameter of the large open end of a speaking trumpet be small in comparison with the wave-length, the waves on arrival suffer copious reflection But by sufficiently prolonging the cone, this reflection may be diminished, and it will tend to cease when the diameter of the open end includes a large number of wave-lengths. Apart from friction it would therefore be possible, by diminishing the angle of the cone, to obtain from a given source any desired amount of energy, and at the same time by lengthening the cone to secure the unimpeded transference of this energy from the tube to the surrounding air.”—Rayleigh Sound, Vol. II., Art. 280.

The statement quoted in the previous paragraph was written by Lord Rayleigh so long ago as 1878, and was based on a theoretical problem set in the Cambridge Tripos Examination in 1876. Our attention has been drawn to it by a note from Mr. Wilson, who points out that in this simple piece of acoustical theory, which has passed unnoticed by gramophone manufacturers for so long, we have a striking explanation of the distinguishing features of the new H.M.V. instruments. We have spent a good deal of time, both collectively and individually in testing the new instruments in order to determine precisely what these features are and in order to discover, as far as we could, what parts of the machine are responsible for them. In committee we have tested three different models, viz., the £7 Portable (No. 101), the £25 Oak Cabinet (No. 161), and the £45 Oak Pedestal (No. 511), and individual members have at different times tested several of the other models which have so far been put on the market. We can say at once that the new instruments bear out the theory in a most remarkable way. Later on in this article we will develop this point further and indicate some respects in which, as it seems to us, the theory indicates that substantial improvements can be effected.

The features which must strike every hearer at once are the amazing volume of sound and the power which the new instruments give to the bass. Quantitatively, these features vary a good deal between the different models; they are most marked in No. 511 and least marked in the smaller models, including the Portable. The comparison here is between different models of the new instrument. When we compare each model with the corresponding member of the old H.M.V. series, the statement requires some

modification; *proportionately* we think the greatest increase in volume and bass-resonance has been made in the Portable model. But on all the models the deep tones in the bass are specially prominent and represent an achievement which has probably never been made in anything like the same degree. With the treble, however, the reverse is the case. We have no doubt whatever that the new instruments do not respond effectively to acute pitches. The Editor, in his November article, remarked on the failure of the new instruments to reproduce voices in their proper character, though the explanation does not seem to have occurred to him at that time. It is an invariable rule that any gramophone which reproduces voices, or any of the string or reed instruments for that matter, out of their true character is not reproducing overtones in their proper proportion. The character of a musical sound depends very largely on the relative strengths of the overtones and these mostly belong to the upper register. There are several other features which lead to the same conclusion. Thus, we find that the new instruments are not so successful with chamber music; the real string quality is not faithfully reproduced. The surface noise is less prominent and comes out in sounds of seemingly lower pitch; much of the hissing quality of the new recording is suppressed, but with it a number of the instruments disappear, e.g., the shake of the tambourines in the last bars of the H.M.V. *Malagueña* record.

This tendency to reproduce sounds rather out of their proper character was not so evident on the smaller instruments as on the larger models. We obtained a more faithful reproduction of voices on the portable than on the cabinet models; on the latter Galli-Curci sounded too fat and buxom, but the portable gave a reproduction much more like the little lady herself. Like the Editor we found that on the cabinet models the No. 2 box gave a more lifelike reproduction of voices than the No. 4; and with the No. 2 the results were better on model 511 than on model 161; on the latter the voice was inclined to be too hard, which indicates a tendency to exaggerate the middle register. Probably the Exhibition box will reproduce voices better on model 161 than the No. 2 sound-box does, but we have not had time to put this idea to the test.

We fully agree with the Editor that the Portable is a wonderful little machine; it is certainly the best portable we have heard and gives a better reproduction than many table and cabinet gramophones which are on the market. We have never

been disposed to expect very much from portable gramophones, but this machine will induce all to raise their demands in the future. We made one or two special observations with this instrument which are worthy of mention. We found at first a slight tendency to buzz. We traced this to the needle containers which have been fixed to the lid just above the opening of the horn. The buzz was still present, though less noticeable, when we removed the needles, so we proceeded to unscrew the containers themselves. The buzz then disappeared and an immediate improvement in tone was also noticeable. This led us to inquire into the effect of the lid itself on the tone of the machine. We found this to be quite appreciable. When we pushed back the movable flap behind which a number of records can be stored we found that the tone became thinner. It was clear that this flap was acting like a sounding-board and that the cavity at the back of the flap was also assisting. When we removed the lid-stay and allowed the lid to fall back the reproduction was distinctly shriller. We found, in fact, that the best position for the lid was that in which it is normally held by the stay. We therefore advise readers who purchase one of the new portables to unscrew the needle containers from the lid. We also advise them to remove records from behind the flap before starting to play the instrument and to wind up the motor *before* putting a record on the turntable; otherwise they stand a good chance of breaking the record in winding.

In our view, the new H.M.V. instruments are remarkable more in the expectations they hold out for the future than in what they have achieved in the present. For sheer quality of tone we prefer the horn models upon which we reported in our last article; the volume is less and the bass-resonance not so prominent, but the subtleties of instrumental and vocal colour are better defined. Nevertheless, we feel that the new models have in them the germ of something much better. At present, their failures are largely due to the sound-box, which does not give the overtones a chance. Notwithstanding the Editor's rather unkind remarks in the November issue about Quidnuncs, Hownows, and Whatnots, we say quite frankly that in our opinion the No. 4 box is not a success. It is better certainly than most of the large-diaphragmed sound-boxes, but we are more convinced than ever that the large diaphragm and the plain pivot suspension are delusive will-o'-the-wisps; they lead to the quagmires and not to the other side of the forest. The physical reason for the adoption of such a sound-box for the new instruments is made clear by Lord Rayleigh's remarks quoted at the beginning of this article. The angle of the tone-arm and horn, which must be considered as a single unit, has been substantially decreased; as a result more energy is taken from the sound-box, the

"source" of sound. But the open end of the horn is not large enough to permit of the unimpeded transference of this energy to the outer air. The back reflection is more pronounced with notes of lower frequency, and therefore longer wave-length, whilst the transference to the outer air of the notes of higher pitch is more easily secured. Consequently, the ordinary small sound-box tends on these instruments, to over-emphasise the middle or upper register and give a hard, if not shrill, reproduction. It is significant in this connection that model 511 which has the largest opening gives a better result with a smaller sound-box than the smaller models. In order to counter-balance the tendency for reflection of bass notes a larger diaphragm, which emphasises the lower register and suppresses the upper register, has been used.

This is an outline of the way in which Lord Rayleigh's theory may apply to the new instruments. None of our observations conflict with that theory and many of those which were unexpected strengthen its application considerably. We suggest therefore that the next line of development will be towards larger cabinets with a bigger flare for the horn and a larger open end, and the reversion from the No. 4 box to one of smaller diameter with a light spring suspension. We make this forecast with some confidence. After all, there is no real reason why gramophones should remain as small as they are now; a grand piano is not a small piece of furniture, and yet it finds a place in many homes. Side by side with these developments, however, others will also have to take place if any real progress is to be made. We doubt very much whether the present record grooves and record material will stand the strain of this increased extraction of energy which the new systems of recording and the new developments in reproducers appear to contemplate. In that case the subject of record wear would become more important than ever. The improved alignment of the new instruments (about 8° error at the outside decreasing to zero at the inside of a full 12in. record) will counteract that tendency to some extent; and the introduction of a suitable flexible connector for the sound-box would probably do more. But unless a stronger record material is discovered, we expect there will be a lot of trouble on this head. Stronger motors which can give up the requisite amount of energy may also be required.

We have dealt rather fully with these new machines in this article because they deserve it. If we have emphasised their faults rather than their virtues it is not because we do not realise those virtues; they will be apparent without emphasis from us. It is rather that the novel effects of the new instruments may tend to obscure their weaknesses and so prejudice that future development which we are all so anxious to see.

POPULAR RECORDS

A FOURTH LIST

THE following list completes the hundred best records as chosen by the votes of our readers in the July competition. The previous seventy will be found in the October, November, and December numbers, and anyone who is starting a library or who wishes to be guided through the mazes of the catalogues by the collective judgment of keen gramophonists (since none but the keen would have bothered to enter for the competition), would do well to go carefully through the whole list of the hundred "tried favourites."

71.—Vocalion, K.05155. *Handel's Sonata in A, Op. 1, No. 3*, played by Albert Sammons (violin) and Ethel Hobday (piano) (4s. 6d.).

72.—H.M.V., D.A.370. *Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 3, No. 1* (Rachmaninoff) and *Spinning Song, Op. 67, No. 4* (Mendelssohn), played by Rachmaninoff (6s.).

73.—H.M.V., D.B.102. *Midnight Review* (Glinka) and *The Two Grenadiers* (Schumann), sung in Russian by Chaliapine (8s. 6d.).

74.—Col., L.1196. *Tannhäuser Overture* (Wagner), played by the New Queen's Hall Orchestra under Sir Henry Wood (6s. 6d.).

75.—H.M.V., D.B.635. *L'altra notte in fondo al mare* from *Mefistofele* (Boito) and *Elle a fui* from *Contes d'Hoffmann* (Offenbach), sung by Frances Alda (8s. 6d.).

76.—Brunswick, 50018. *Mon cœur s'œuvre à ta voix* from *Samson et Dalila* (Saint-Saëns) and *Chanson Bohème* (Bizet), sung by Sigrid Onegin (8s.).

77.—H.M.V., D.282. *Softly awakes my heart* from *Samson et Dalila* (Saint-Saëns) and *When all was young* from *Faust* (Gounod), sung in English by Edna Thornton (6s. 6d.).

78.—H.M.V., D.Q.100. *Señtè, Chi mi frena*, from *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Donizetti), sung by Caruso, Galli-Curci, Egner, Journet, de Luca, and Bada; and *Quartet, Un dì, se ben rammentomi* (*Bella figlia dell'amore*) from *Rigoletto* (Verdi), sung by Caruso, Galli-Curci, Perini, and de Luca (16s.).

79, 80.—H.M.V., D.523, 528. *Hungarian Fantasia* (Liszt), played by Arthur de Greef, accompanied by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra under Sir Landon Ronald (13s.).

81.—H.M.V., B.1999. *Shenandoah, Rio Grande, and Billy Boy*, sea shanties arranged by Sir R. R. Terry and sung by John Goss and male quartet (3s.).

82, 83, 84.—Col., L.1494, 1495, 1496. *Sonata in A, Op. 8, No. 1* (Mozart), played by Arthur Catterall (violin) and Sir Hamilton Harty (piano) (25s. 6d.).

85.—H.M.V., 054129. *O soave Fanciulla* from *La Bohème* (Puccini), sung by Caruso and Melba (10s. 6d.).

86, 87, 88.—H.M.V., D.125, 126, 127. *Casse-Noisette Suite* (Tchaikovsky), played by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra under Sir Landon Ronald (25s. 6d.).

89.—Parlo., E.10278. *O du die mir einst Hülfe gab* from *Iphigenia in Tauris* (Gluck) and *Ach' ich fühl's es ist verschwunden* (*Pamina's Air*) from *The Magic Flute* (Mozart), sung by Zinaida Jurjevskaja (4s. 6d.).

90.—Vocalion, A.0207. *The Song of the Flea* (Moussorgsky) and *The Goat*, sung in Russian by Vladimir Rosing (5s. 6d.).

91.—H.M.V., D.B.103. *The Song of the Flea* (Moussorgsky) and *The Song of the Viking Guest* from *Sadko* (Rimsky-Korsakov), sung by Chaliapine (8s. 6d.).

92, 93.—H.M.V., D.697, 698. *Variations Symphoniques* (César Franck), played by Arthur de Greef with the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra under Sir Landon Ronald (13s.).

94.—H.M.V., D.690. *Coriolan Overture* (Beethoven), played by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, under Sir Landon Ronald (6s. 6d.).

95, 96.—Col., L.1557, 1558. *Suite in B minor for flute and strings* (J. S. Bach), played by Robert Murchie with the Symphony Orchestra under Sir Hamilton Harty (13s.).

97, 98.—H.M.V., D.160, 161. *Spring Song, Op. 62, No. 6*, and *Bees' Wedding* (Mendelssohn), played by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra under Sir Landon Ronald (13s.).

99.—H.M.V., D.A.382. *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges, Op. 34, No. 2* (Mendelssohn) and *Horch, Horch, die Lerch* (*Ständchen*) (Schubert), sung in German by Frieda Hempel (6s.).

100.—H.M.V., D.B.381. *Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 2* (Liszt), played by Paderewski (8s. 6d.).

The total cost of these hundred records would be £34 6s., and the average cost a fraction under 6s. 10½d. each. It will be noticed that in a few instances—such as the *Erl King*, the *Song of the Flea*, *Mon cœur s'œuvre à ta voix*, and the *Tannhäuser Overture*—duplicate versions have found a place; which seems to show that if only one version were in existence the music might have gained a higher position on its own merits without a split vote.

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Firth Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—I enclose £1 ls. for the Opera Fund. I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the way THE GRAMOPHONE is conducted. I have just bought, *without hearing*, a £40 new H.M.V. gramophone entirely on the Editor's words in the November number. I would have done so on no other person's recommendation. You ought to be proud of this, as it shows what faith I have in his disinterestedness and absolute fairness. No other publication that I know of merits this qualification, with the possible exception of *The Field*. As long as THE GRAMOPHONE is run on these lines and refuses to be a slave to its advertisers it will be a success. Yours truly,

[The writer of this letter prefers to remain anonymous, but the original can be seen at the London Office.—ED.]

THE GRAMOPHONE IN AMERICA.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Those of us who know the Edison instrument are, I believe, unanimous in our admission that, in point of natural reproduction of tone, especially of pianoforte tone, this gramophone (they call it phonograph) stands pre-eminent. We are united, too, I take it, in our opinion of the Edison Company's policy which caters to the gramophone owner rather than to the musical enthusiast; their record list, as a matter of fact, is so wholeheartedly devoted to trashy examples of sentimental balladism, American humour, and frenzied jazz, that the product of the Edison laboratories is, unfortunately, quite beyond the regard of the serious music lover. Some of us, perhaps, have optimistically hoped that our cause for grievance might, at some not too distant date, be rectified; that, in other words, the Edison people would see the error of their ways and turn over a new leaf. One might as well, I suppose, pray for the Millennium, for the longed-for new leaf seems as far off as ever. In fact, it shows so little sign of sprouting that I wrote recently to the Edison concern upbraiding them for their apparent apathy to real music, and enquiring whether some improvement might not soon be expected. I pointed out the great things other recording companies were doing (especially in England), and told them what splendid opportunities they were certainly missing.

Mr. Edison himself replied. He declares, in effect, that the people of America do not want good music, that the reproduction for the gramophone of operatic and symphonic music does not represent a sound, commercial proposition—in America. Mr. Edison supplies data concerning other companies' efforts to introduce this class of music, which goes to show that money has been lost in the experiment. Furthermore, he remarks, if in New York the Metropolitan operatic ventures have for seventy consecutive seasons sustained a heavy deficit (met by private subscription), what chance has the gramophone record devoted to opera? The inventor is, however, inclined to be magnanimous. He promises that in the near future he will make a series of records of really high-class music, merely to uphold prestige. As a commencement the *Moonlight Sonata* has been done, but whether complete or in part only is not mentioned. Mr. Edison declares the recording perfect, as it surely must be.

All of which is a fair indication of the lack of real interest in music existing to-day in America. It is not too much to say that America, generally speaking, is almost devoid of musical culture. She is interested in musical personality, in the foreign artiste already famous, and is willing to pay heavily for the novelty of becoming host to distinguished guests. America dictates, nevertheless, in what manner she shall be amused in return for her lavish reception. And so we find famous musicians and singers stooping to the performance of music of the popular kind for which one's mildest abuse is that it is hopelessly mediocre. One may imagine in what contemptuous regard these examples of American taste in

music are held. And I am not sure, too, that the contempt does not extend, in turn, to those who call the tune.

Study any one of the Victor Co.'s recent supplemental lists (I mention Victor because it offends less than any other, as a rule). What do we find? Frances Alda in *Indian Dawn* and *Please keep out of my dreams*. We are told this is a thrillingly beautiful record. Is it? I wonder. And Gabrilowitsch, as fine a pianist as anyone could wish for, indulging in slight things such as Grainger's *Shepherd's Hey* and a *passepied* of Delibes; Gigli bursts forth into Spanish song—in English! We may soon, no doubt, expect Arabic love-songs in German. Still, one must bear in mind that Spanish songs are really the very latest craze in America just now, and the vagaries of the crowd must, of course, be catered to. Kreisler, the incomparable, lends his wizardry to nothing better than melodious snippets of the type Mr. Mackenzie once aptly dubbed "saccharine." A little while ago we had this famous violinist in an arrangement of *Love sends a little gift of roses*. Ye gods! It reminds me of the episode of the lady who wanted *Killen on the keys* (was it not?) played by Pachmann. McCormack still rants in terms of moonlight and love. He produces regularly, like a conjurer from his sleeve, one example after another of the stereotyped melody with which his ballad factory supplies him. Occasionally, to relieve the monotony, either Rachmaninoff or Stokowski with his Philadelphia Orchestra will stealthily slip in something worth while, but these verdant spots are very few and far between. The latest recordings by this organisation, by the way, are the prelude to *Lohengrin* and the weird *Danse Macabre*. A special word of praise is due here, not merely on account of fine interpretation, but more particularly for an unusually brilliant reproduction of orchestral tone, so startling, in fact, as to induce the suspicion that some new method of recording has been employed. I am an orchestral "fend," and affirm, without hesitation, that these two records (double-sided, 12-inch, Red Seal) more accurately reproduce the impression of an orchestra than any other in my collection.

One realises, of course, that what is happening in America to-day is but an echo of the conditions which existed in England but a few years back. To-day we may point with pride to the strenuous efforts being made by all the leading gramophone concerns to give us of the very best in completely recorded versions of the masters. It is, to be sure, a difficult problem nowadays for the gramophile of moderate means to keep pace with the splendid repertoires now being offered. At one time it was a simple matter, with nothing more exciting or expensive than the *Fifth Symphony* in the H.M.V. catalogue. In America the only completely recorded work of any length or importance is, I believe, the Victor Co.'s Schumann *Quintet* and the *Unfinished Symphony*. In America they do not believe in anything too completely recorded. They much prefer to take their music in abbreviated doses. It suits them better, over there, to take the *Andante* from Tchaikovsky's first string quartet, for instance, and dish it up in any other but its original setting. On the American plan we should have this or any other melodic morsel played for violin by Kreisler, for pianoforte by Cortot or Rachmaninoff, for orchestra by Victor Herbert, and jazzed by Paul Whiteman and his crew. It would, moreover, in its several disguises, reap the reward of many more dollars—in America.

Hong Kong.

H. L. WILSON.

[Perhaps some American reader will pick up the gauntlet?—ED.]

HEIFETZ.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The reason that I have found courage to write to you regarding my disagreement with N. P. and numerous other critics in the matter of Heifetz' playing, is that I believe a vast number of people will share my point of view, particularly violinists. Apart from the available records, I heard Heifetz play four or five years ago. It was then, one might almost say fashionably, for critics to accuse him of cold, soulless, brilliancy, much to my disgust and astonishment. I firmly believe that this effect was produced then, as it is to a much smaller extent now, by Heifetz' appearance and manner when playing. His emotionless face suggests the detachment referred to by N. P., but the thought that passed through my mind was that he concentrated all his great emotional powers on the actual playing without a trace of waste muscular movement. Except in pieces of purely brilliant construction I could not detect coldness and cannot now. One of my sceptical friends, an accomplished musician and violinist, I have since converted to my point of view, which relieves me of that feeling of talking nonsense.

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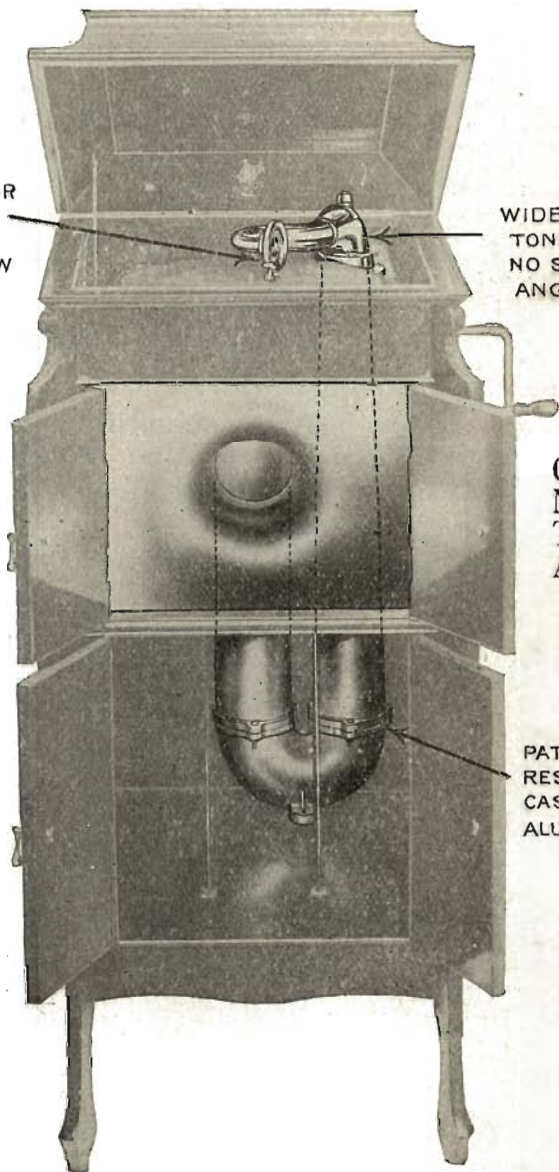
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Before venturing to write to you I have waited to hear Heifetz play again in Manchester. The programme included the Beethoven *Kreutzer Sonata* and the unaccompanied Bach *Chaconne*, which items proved how impossible it is to judge him by his records. Even the keen ear of Mr. S. Langford failed to detect any coldness. Rather he took exception to the wealth of nuance and subtle changes in the *Kreutzer* first movement, as such warmth is rather out of place in the German classical school! In the *Chaconne* we heard Heifetz at his greatest. The tone was superb, and the technique, of course, was faultless. I suppose the Gramophone Company, Ltd., will be making some new records while he is in England. I hope you, Mr. Editor, will produce your magic wand of persuasion and prevail on the Company to issue at least one great work by Heifetz. All gramophone users know that the recording companies deny you nothing, because you have a powerful juju to back you up.

Yours truly,

WALTER B. PENNY.

Stockport.

NEW RECORDING.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—... To my mind modern recording in the bulk is worse, not better, than the old. Look at Coldstream Guards now and two or three years ago; mellowness and reality have given place to screaming. Even the Vocalion Life Guards are nothing like their former selves. Each month I try H.M.V., Columbia, Vocalion, Brunswick, Parlophone, and finish with a sigh for the days of old—say 1920–21. But Victors, with which I have only just become acquainted, have provided some compensation. I speak only of their orchestral numbers; I don't think much of the vocal records. The *Oberon Overture* (6224, New York Philharmonic Orchestra)... is by far the finest orchestral record ever produced, or perhaps I ought to say "to my knowledge." The playing is great, but it is the *tout ensemble* which appeals—a perfect delight. Liszt's *Preludes* (6225 and 6373), same orchestra, are nearly as good but spoilt by the brass on the fourth side. In the same class, though not rivalling *Oberon*, is the *Euryanthe Overture* (55229), by the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

Yours faithfully,

G. C. MONKTON.

Bromley, Kent.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—May I be permitted to express a few opinions on the new recordings of the H.M.V. Co.? In the various reviews where these records are spoken of, nearly every time mention is made of the peculiar and unpleasant twang which is so prominent on the orchestral discs.... Take, for example, one of the new *Parsifal* records. To the Wagner-lover here was apparently a great treat in store, but on getting one to see what they were like—"Klingsor's Magic Garden and the Flower Maidens Scene, No. D.1030"—what on earth had happened! To me the marvellous music of this scene (even though deprived of the voices, which is a pity) is completely spoilt by the atrocious strident and squeaky tone. In the louder parts, even with an ordinary medium-toned needle, which is excellent in previous orchestral records, the din is ear-splitting, a continual humming roar pervading everything. In the softer parts the strings sound well at times, but no better than in some records I have.... The general tone of the orchestra is destroyed entirely by the new method of recording. Other opinions on these records would be very interesting, and I hope we shall have this matter freely discussed.

Yours faithfully,

E. LESLIE GUNSTON.

Bayswater.

[The above letter, which has been abridged, is one of several received which agree with the views of "Indicator" in the last number on the *Parsifal* records.—Ed.]

POLYDOR RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have been greatly interested in the various opinions expressed in THE GRAMOPHONE on the subject of Polydor records, but am surprised that no one has commented on the excellence of the Beethoven *Fourth Symphony*. The only thing, in my opinion, which mars this set of records is the scratch, which is unpleasantly noticeable in the quiet opening of the second movement. The *Eroica* is also a splendid recording, though it fails in one or two passages of the last movement. The *Coriolan Overture* is another fine record, and I should like to know if *Leonora No. 3* is equally

good, as I am far from satisfied with my H.M.V. recording. Finally, I consider that the tone of many of my records is greatly improved by the use of the Tungstyle needle (in place of H.M.V. loud tone steel). The most pronounced improvement I have noticed is in the Mozart *G minor Symphony* (Vocalion). I find though, that the new H.M.V. recordings call for a softer tone needle and the Columbia soft tone seems to meet the case.

Yours faithfully,

B. F. FLETCHER.

East Horsley.

[I agree about Tungstyles, but they are too uncertain to recommend.—Ed.]

WAGNER RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have read with much interest and pleasure Mr. Wilfrid B. Haworth's letter in your November issue, and with your permission I should like to draw attention to one small point.

Siegfried. H.M.V., D.702: Brünnhilde yields to Siegfried: Mr. Haworth leads one to suppose that there are two "cuts" in this record, but I do not think that this is correct. The record commences with Brünnhilde's *O Siegfried! Denn war ich von je!*; it is then cut from Siegfried's *Fasst dich mein Arm* down to Brünnhilde's *Jauchzen der Liebe jagt es davon!* (inclusive); Brünnhilde then continues, *Ob jetzt ich dein!* (commencing on B flat, not A flat), and from this point onwards there is no further omission. The words *Ob jetzt ich dein!* occur twice in the space of about 18 bars, but the words are sung once only (in English, of course), namely, where they occur for the second time; one can make certain of this by means of the accompaniment.

I trust that Mr. Haworth will be assured that I draw attention to the point rather as a matter of interest than as a criticism of his very instructive letter.

I have checked in this way many operatic records with the vocal scores, and it may perhaps interest some of your readers to have particulars of the H.M.V. records of the *Tristan and Isolde* love duet (D.736 and 737), as these records have caused me more difficulty than any others, with the exception of Beckmesser's *Serenade* (D.752), which, I must confess, has beaten me in one or two places. My results are as follow. (The references are to the "Breitkopf and Härtel" vocal score.)

D.736. Part I.—Page 94–101, line 3, commencing with the Introduction to Act II. and carrying on without a break to Isolde's *Wie hört'ich sie, tösten noch Hörner?* (Madame Austral sings both Isolde and Brangäne.) Part II.: Pages 115–147, commencing with Isolde's *Zur Warte du, dort wache treu!* The omissions are (1) A short omission in the orchestral part following *Sie zu löschen zag' ich nicht* (page 116); (2) page 124, line 3, page 143, line 2, commencing with Isolde's *Wie lange fern!*, and ending with Isolde's *Musstest du's übergeben!*; (3) page 143, line 4, page 146, line 3, commencing with Isolde's *Wie er trug ich's nur?* and ending with Tristan's *Wo urewig, einzig wahr!*; the orchestra then continues from this point, but Tristan does not sing *Liebeswonne ihm lacht.*

D.737.—Part III. Page 147, line 3, page 156, line 3, commencing where the last record ended and finishing with the last words of Brangäne's call (which is sung by Madame Austral), *Bald entweicht die Nacht.* There is an omission, page 150, line 1, to page 153, line 2, commencing with Isolde's *Barg im Busen uns sich die Sonne*, and ending with the words of Isolde and Tristan, *Liebe-heiligstes Leben.* Part IV.: Pages 165–178, commencing with Tristan's *Soll ich lauschen?* and ending with *Höchste Liebeslust!* where Kurwenal enters. There is an omission, which I think is as follows: Page 168, line 1, to page 170, line 2, commencing with Isolde's *Wen du umfängen* and ending with *Not befreit!*, where Tristan continues, *Wie sie fassen.*

The singing is in English and the diction is not clear in places, but owing to the "cuts," I think that the translation has been altered considerably to make sense. I shall, of course, welcome any corrections.

Yours faithfully,

RICHARD A. LYNEX.

Northwich.

RECORDS AND REVIEWS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Most of your correspondents who criticise the critics are so kind, and make their suggestions so nicely, that it seems rather a pity to turn upon them at all; but there are some considerations that I should much like to lay before them. To do so in such a way as to present the critics' case fairly would take

up a very great deal of space, for the matters in question are by no means easily set forth.

I hope you will allow me to present some small part of the matter, as the professional music critic sees it. At the moment all I want to do is to assure Mr. Lionel Gilman, who in the last paragraph of his December letter (page 331) "doubts whether the reviewer of the latest Lener realises that in his enthusiasm for Beethoven's work he has been far too kind to the playing and recording," that his doubt is thoroughly justified. The reviewer (myself) does not realise any such thing, and is quite convinced that he has not been anything of the sort. Now we come to grips—or would, if your space allowed—on the big question of whose opinion is more nearly true—mine or Mr. Gilman's. Useless for Mr. Gilman to quote the agreement of others. I can quote the agreement of others with me (my friend the reviewer of *The Musical Times*, for instance; see the December issue of that journal). But this matching of opinions, Mr. Gilman will agree, can only be of use when the experience and training of the combatants is known to all who look on and listen. It is impossible to do more in a short note than indicate one or two of the very many things that ought to be required of any witness before his opinion can be of value. He must, for instance, know the work inside out; that is, he must have heard it played many times, and must have known from comparative experience the quality of the players on each occasion. He must know the music from the score—a very important requirement of which I think the amateur critic too often does not realise the significance. Before, for instance, he says that this or that part is or is not sufficiently prominent, he must know from study of the score whether the composer wanted it to be prominent or not. Similarly, with regard to all points of interpretation, he must know the characteristics of the composer's style, so as to realise, for instance, whether he was setting down in the happiest way what he wished to say. Some composers, again, were fine orchestrators; others were not. Does the critic know, from prolonged experience of hearing and reading this composer's work in this particular form, exactly what were his powers of using the medium in which he is working? Then the critic should follow the gramophone performance with the score, carefully noting whether what is heard is a reasonably true account of the score (allowing as best he may for gramophonic weaknesses). Then he must disentangle such elements for praise and blame as he finds, putting each down to its proper cause, avoiding blaming the players for what his experience and expert knowledge tell him are the disc's faults, and equally avoiding giving praise to the players for something which they have not done. There are by-paths of attention that the trained critic has to heed, all the time, but space fails to tell of these. The whole business of criticism is made up of a multitude of small but important attentions, and it is the trained critic's business to balance and weigh, to sift and sort the evidence of ear and eye, and of history, in order to give as true an account of the performance as he (necessarily an imperfect, because a human, judge) can. But all the time he is exercising faculties that have been refined and developed by many years of hard work. My little grumble is that Mr. Gilman, and I think some other amateur critics, seem to assume that the trained man blandly passes over important and fundamental considerations. Why is this assumed? Because the trained man's opinion differs from Mr. Gilman's? Because, if you like, the opinions of many trained men differ from those of many untrained? When I use the word "untrained" I do not apply it in any scornful way. I have worked among laymen long enough to know and value many of their views, founded as they often are upon the most careful thought. But the big point I do want to stress is that the trained man, by virtue of his training, is likely to see and hear more, and to draw sounder deductions because of his wider knowledge, than the untrained. Surely this needs no urging. The gamekeeper leads through the wood, and gives us its life in a few words. We see nothing but trees and grass—beautiful, but conveying nothing of the drama that is going on within. Here an animal passed; there are signs (visible only to the trained eye) of a tragedy of nature. Our friend sees it all, simply because he has been trained to minuteness of observation. Add to such training a long course in daily ratiocination—reasoning as to the nature of composition, the powers of composers, their strengths and weaknesses, and a hundred other things that come in the critic's training—and you have some hint of the differences that are likely to lie between the trained and the untrained. Intuition and taste will carry the artistically-minded layman far. Indeed, as often trained men allow, you could find half a dozen laymen who would put to shame half a dozen profes-

sional men; but you would not find them if you selected at random. It must be obvious that the average trained man sees and hears more than the untrained; and the reason is simply because he is trained to do so.

Will those who too readily assume that the trained man has "missed" this, that, or the other consideration, please be a little more ready to try and understand what his training means? We do not tell the expert cabinet-maker to his face, when he discourses on the defects of a piece of work that we are both surveying (and that seems perfectly good to the layman) that he is wrong—that we are as competent to assess the work as he is. The humblest skilled workman gets attention, but the musician too often is thrust aside as of little account. I admit that this state of affairs is due largely to the mildness and meekness of the average musician; but I hope your good readers who may differ from your professional critics will realise (I am sure most of them do, but some don't) that the reviewers (working in the most difficult conditions imaginable as to time—conditions that, of course, you, Sir, can in no wise alter; they are the necessary conditions of the work) are giving the most concentrated attention to their labours; that that attention is backed by many years of daily work in all kinds of criticism; that such experience is, in the great majority of cases, further backed by wide reading, by every kind of knowledge that can by any means throw light on the problems of the music and its performance; that on the broad basis of knowledge and experience their views are, on the face of things, likely to be pretty sound as to essentials—that is, that they are, in nine cases out of ten, such as the majority of trained men would take; and that, if we defer to training in any other work, trade or art, it is reasonable to do so in music.

That curious question (though there is really much less doubt in it than is generally assumed to exist)—the question of "taste," is mentioned merely as a footnote. It looms large in the minds of all who exercise any sort of choice in artistic things; and I have no doubt that some who read this have wondered why I have not mentioned it before. Again, an essay could be written, without going beyond the mere outlines of the matter; but I would make just one point in closing. Taste is to be cultivated, through just such methods as are used for developing the knowledge of one's job. He who imagines that "taste" is a sort of heaven-sent gift, that makes up for the lack of training, is sadly deceived. That is the easy gospel. There are some people who have naturally good taste, but they are few—very few. Most of us have to cultivate taste by hard work and by constantly referring our likes and dislikes to standards that greater men have set for us. Liking and disliking have very little to do with criticism. They are only the fringe of the matter. We must have reasons for our tastes; and the great main lines of all taste in artistic things are not matters of caprice. They are known, and any man who is willing to submit to hard work can know them; but he will not come by them merely by chance, nor even by much listening to gramophone records. Something may be done in that way, but do not let us forget that an immense amount of humbug has been written about the average man's natural good taste. In things of art he has little or no good taste, in his natural state. He must get it by hard work, as we get all good things that are worth having in this life. He must, in a word, be trained in taste. His taste must be developed and informed; it must rest on the widest possible knowledge and experience.

Without making exaggerated claims, I think your reviewers can claim with reason that they have had this training. Behind and above all my points I do want to insist on the necessity for training, without which criticism is of very little use. Your reviewers, I am sure, no more claim infallibility, even in the directions in which they have been specially trained, than does any sensible man; but I, for one, beg to claim, in the friendliest manner, that the trained man is entitled to speak in stronger accents than the untrained, and that his judgment ought not to be too readily impugned by those who have not received his training.

May I, in closing, again assure your correspondent and any to whom these words may seem in the least hard, that I greatly value the companionship and the support of all who, not being professional musicians, are willing to allow the professional man his reasonable place—and that means the very great majority of readers, I am sure. The others, I hope, will not think the worse of us if we stand up and defend ourselves now and again.

Nothing but good, I am convinced, can come from the discussion of our respective standpoints, so long as that discussion is as friendly as it is frank.

London.

Yours faithfully,

"K. K."

TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

Mozart

Our first attempt at a coloured Art Supplement last month has evidently been a great success, and several readers have sent for extra copies of the portrait of Mozart. These can be supplied for 6d. each, post free, packed flat and ready for framing.

For reasons of expense it will not be possible to have these coloured portraits of composers often; but we shall do our best.

Corrections

In the review of new Orchestral Records last month the title of Parlo. E.10376, the Overture to *Iphigenia in Tauris* (Gluck), played by the Opera House Orchestra under Dr. Weissmann, was omitted by mistake, though the record itself was reviewed by K. K.

The Gramophone Company, Limited, has pointed out a mistake on p. 319 in the note added to the report of the Expert Committee on the H.M.V. Horn and School Models. Model No. 25 is still available to the public at the price of £8 10s. in oak and £9 in mahogany.

Mr. Francis E. Terry wishes us to point out two inaccuracies in his article on Mozart (pp. 309, 310). K.218 is Violin Concerto No. 4 (not 5) in D, and K.219 Violin Concerto No. 5 (not 6) in A.

Hoc erat in voto

Those who were with us from the start of THE GRAMOPHONE'S existence, nearly three years ago, will most easily understand with what emotions we hear that the Columbia Company have prepared printed slips showing the divisions of the score and the cuts (if any) in all the chamber music records and in all the orchestral records in their catalogue. It is indeed only one more instance of the readiness of the companies to carry out any reasonable suggestion made in THE GRAMOPHONE to increase the amenities of gramophony—a readiness for which, in the name of our readers, we thank them sincerely. But in a way this latest instance is the most significant. It implies that since the Gramophone Co. issued the first complete quartet (the Brahms *C minor*) at the beginning of 1924 we have advanced so rapidly that all works recorded previously, before public opinion had become articulate, can now be regarded dispassionately and frankly like mutilated fragments of sculpture, still having a beauty and value of their own because they have not been yet supplanted by any thing more satisfying. The Columbia Company has set a sensible and brave example which we trust will be quickly followed by the other companies.

Eric Marshall

Eric Marshall—his photograph herewith—is as keen as it is possible to be on the recording side of his musical activities. He has just been making a group of records at Hayes—Schubert, Brahms, Quilter, Cyril Scott—and speaks enthusiastically of the recent improvements in the recording room. The lessening of artificiality struck him most; the naturalness of the new methods, and the greater subtlety of the recording itself. As in golf, he remarks, "pressing" is to be avoided; and there is the same feeling of freedom in the recording of a song as in the hitting of a golf-ball: the same response to accuracy and poise. Eric

Marshall, who, by the way, was *not* at Eton—let the legend be squashed once and for all—it was his brother who was at Eton—is only at the beginning of his gramophone career, though he has already made his mark; and the future, lit up with his debonaire enthusiasm, is rosy with promise of achievement.

Complete Operas

Two pieces of information that are worth noting come from the Gramophone Exchange, 29, New Oxford Street, W.C.1. Firstly, they have a small catalogue of the complete operas which they sell; there are more of them in existence than one might suppose, and besides the toy theatre fanatics—a growing body—there are many people who like to follow an opera right through from beginning to end on the gramophone, even though this involves 20 double-sided records like *Faust*. The prices throughout are 4s. 6d. for 12-inch and 3s. for 10-inch records.

Secondly, the Gramophone Exchange has enlarged its facilities for the supply of Fonotipias, a make of record which has always been much in demand by collectors of operatic records. The prices are 4s. 6d. for 12-inch and 3s. for 10½-inch records. Catalogues may be obtained by sending a postcard.

Real Philanthropy

A correspondent writes to the Editor: "Don't carry out your threat of this month's GRAMOPHONE. I am ordering *St. Paul* which you are 'blackmailing' us into! And I enclose a cheque for 13s. Will you kindly present the records to any genuine music-lover you know who doesn't find it convenient to buy the records." We have had no difficulty in finding a grateful recipient for this gift, and quote the incident as an example of the charming spirit of our readers which makes our work so happy.

Collector's Corner

Has any reader more records than one of our American supporters who, in writing, states casually that he has over 14,000?

Has any reader made a collection of records in different languages? Records in over one

thousand dialects and languages have been made by H.M.V. alone, and the article by Dr. Hans Pollak last April about the Vienna Archives opens up a further vista. Trade marks are another subject for the collecting habit. There is the "Writing Angel" as well as the Dog for H.M.V., for instance, though probably a great many people have never seen the former on a record label. It is used in Russia, Italy, India, and most Mahomedan countries.

Society of Women Musicians

In order to conform with the rapidly growing evidence that we have many feminine readers—and among them many musicians—we are glad to draw attention to the Society of Women Musicians (74, Grosvenor Street, W. 1), which has just finished a very successful year's work. There are lectures and programmes of music; there is a fine Chamber Music Library, and weekly Chamber Music practices are held; and for the amateur or the professional it would be hard to suggest a more sensible resolution for the New Year than to join the Society.



ERIC MARSHALL.

National Gramophonic Society Notes

(All Communications should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.)

The object of the National Gramophonic Society is to aim at achieving for gramophone music what such societies as the *Medici* have done for the printed book.

THE current year began on October 1st. In 1924-25 the following works were issued to members: Beethoven, *String Quartet in E flat, Op. 74*; Debussy, *String Quartet in G minor, Op. 10*; Schubert, *Piano Trio in E flat, Op. 100*; Schönberg, *String Sextet, Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4*; Beethoven, *String Quartet in F major, Op. 59, No. 1*; Brahms, *String Sextet in B flat major, Op. 18*; on twenty-four twelve-inch double-sided records.

The *Quartets* were played by the Spencer Dyke Quartet (Spencer Dyke and Edwin Quaife, violins, Ernest Tomlinson, viola, and Patterson Parker, 'cello); the Schubert *Trio* by Spencer Dyke, Patterson Parker, and Harold Craxton, piano, and the two *Sextets* by the Spencer Dyke Quartet with James Lockyer, violin, and E. J. Robinson, 'cello. In addition to these, in the early part of the year, Mr. W. W. Cobbett presented the first 300 members with a record of the *Allegro* from Rubinstein's *Quartet in F, Op. 17, No. 3*, and *The Declaration* from Raff's *Maid of the Mill Suite, Op. 192, No. 2*. The quartet which played these works was led by Mr. Cobbett himself. A few copies still remain, and are available to members at 5s. each. It must be clearly understood that no member may sell any N.G.S. record for less than 7s. 6d. But breakages, etc., can be replaced to members at 5s. each record.

In the choice of works the Committee (which consists of the Editor, the London Editor, and Messrs. W. R. Anderson, W. W. Cobbett, Spencer Dyke, and Alec Robertson) is guided by the voting on a preliminary list which is sent to members at the beginning of the year. As far as possible it is ascertained whether the works chosen are due to be recorded or issued in the near future by the various gramophone companies, so that duplication may be avoided.

Up to the present financial reasons have confined the output to chamber music, but with the growth of the society more ambitious works may be issued.

The membership subscription is 5s. a year; the record subscription, for 24 discs, is £6 a year for the records at 5s. each and 10s. for postage and packing, for members in Great Britain. Members who wish to fetch their records from the office are not, of course, expected to pay this 10s. Overseas members pay 25s. instead of 10s. at the beginning of each year. The subscription can be paid in one lump sum of £6 15s. on October 1st, or two payments of £3 10s. and £3 5s. on October 1st and April 1st respectively, or monthly, 16s. on October 1st and 11s. on the first day of the other months of the year.

All cheques should be made out to "The National Gramophonic Society."

The Voting List

The list of works submitted to members for the current year's programme consisted of the following: Arensky, *Piano Trio*; Bax, *String Quartet in G*; Brahms, *Piano Trio in C minor* and *Clarinet Quintet*; Beethoven, *Piano Trio in B flat, Op. 97*; D'Indy, *String Quartet*; Dohnanyi, *Quintet*; Elgar, *Piano Quintet*; Mendelssohn, *Andante and Scherzo for String Quartet* (Posthumous); Mozart, *Quintet in E flat, K. 614*; Purcell, *Chaconny for String Quartet* and *Fantasies for String Quartet*; Schumann, *Quartet in A minor, Op. 41, No. 1*; Vaughan Williams, *Phantasy Quintet*.

Of these the Brahms quintet and the Purcells were triumphant, the Elgar, Mozart, Vaughan Williams, and Beethoven followed close together; the rest were nowhere in the voting.

Circular Number Seven

This has been sent round to all members announcing what arrangements have been made for the current year. For the sake of those who are interested in the society, but who have not joined, it may be stated that the Gibbons *Fantasies* with Eugene Goossens' *Jack o' Lantern* and *A Lament* by Ernest Tomlinson are soon to be issued on one 10in. and one 12in. record. They will be followed,

probably during January, by the Purcell *Fantasies*, played by the Music Society String Quartet. Arrangements have been made for the Spencer Dyke Quartet to record the Brahms *Clarinet Quintet* and the Elgar *Piano Quintet*. Mr. Thurston is to play the clarinet part in the Brahms and Mrs. Hobday, who was specially suggested by Sir Edward Elgar, has kindly agreed to play the piano part in his quintet. We shall, therefore, have an authoritative rendering.

The Mozart and perhaps the Vaughan-Williams quintet will follow the Brahms and Elgar.

The Purcell Fantasies

These are remarkable works transcribed from MSS in the British Museum by M. André Mangeot, the leader of the Music Society String Quartet. M. Mangeot has contributed an interesting article on them to *Le Monde Musical* (Paris) for October. In one passage (freely paraphrased) he says, "Here, it seems to me, is a perfect example of part-writing, with its freedom of invention, its simplicity, and its daring harmonies; observe the mixture of B flat major and F minor in the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth bars." More will be said about these when they are issued.

Schubert and D'Indy

It was mentioned in Circular No. 7 that the Vincent D'Indy Quartet, which was included in the voting list, has been recorded on French H.M.V.

Another work, which was not on the voting list, but which many members seem to desire, is the Schubert *Octet*. Two movements of this, the *Minuet* and the *Andante*, have been recorded on Polydor 62347 and 65563. Each is backed with a movement from a Mozart *Divertimento*. They are not all that records should be, but are worth possessing.

Policy

Three letters reached me, all on the same day and from different places, advocating a different policy than that at present pursued. They suggested that works chosen by ballot were obviously popular, and, of all others, the most likely to be recorded by the companies. From this they drew, in effect, the rather paradoxical conclusion that members would be best served by disregarding their wishes. But there is a lot to be said for this point of view, coupled with their suggestion that members should be encouraged to name works which they think suitable for recording. As one letter said: "The N.G.S. should supplement, not compete with, the companies." Would members of the N.G.S. prefer their programme to be decided by voting, which may lead to subsequent duplicating, or are they prepared to leave it more in the hands of the committee, who will pay strict and careful attention to any suggestions received?

Will all members who have strong opinions on this subject express them by communicating with the Hon. Secretary?

Subscriptions

All the Mozart records have now been sent out to members except to those who have paid no instalment of the current year's subscription. At the present moment our stock of banker's orders is exhausted, but new ones are being printed to suit the new system of payment, and soon we shall be able to send them to any members who prefer to rely on their banks rather than on their memories for paying their subscriptions.

Past Issues and Re-issues

The only records available from last year's issues are the Beethoven *Quartet in F, Op. 59, No. 1*, and the Brahms *Sextet*. As soon as there is a large enough demand we shall re-issue some of the others.

Perhaps there is a large number of members who wish to dispose of their Schubert or Schönberg records, but cannot do so from reluctance to spoil either set. Will anyone who is in this predicament write to the Hon. Secretary? If there is enough demand the key record might be re-issued at five shillings.

Gramophone Societies' Reports

[Owing to the increasing number of societies, it is unfortunately necessary to ration reporting secretaries down to 200 words a month. Reports must reach the London Office before the fifteenth of the month for inclusion in the next number. Items from programmes must be incorporated in the report; programmes separately attached cannot be printed.]

CARDIFF AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the general meeting held at the beginning of the season, a question arose as to whether the society was to consider only music which was of a fairly serious nature, or to include in its programmes all kinds of "pleasant noises" masquerading as music. Much discussion followed, but nothing definite was arrived at, and it was decided to have a lecture on the point, entitled "What is Good Music?" Accordingly two members, Mr. G. H. Wells and Mr. J. C. Turner, collaborated and produced a paper on this subject, which was read on October 15th by Mr. Turner. The lecture then took various aspects of the art and, by contrasting bad music with good from various standpoints, proved that the former could be beaten easily at its own game. Thus, a typically ephemeral dance composition of to-day was shown to possess a very inferior melody to the lovely air of Gluck's *Che Faro*, sung by Kirkby Lunn; the monotonous beat of another fox-trot was compared with the more delicate and elastic rhythm of the *Scherzo* from Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* music and two movements from Bach's *Suite in B minor for flute and strings*; the empty virtuosity of that silly flute solo, *Wind in the Trees*, was coupled with the poetic brilliance of two Chopin studies, played by Cortot; and the gross sentimentality of *The Rosary* was contrasted with the honest and wholesome atmosphere of Quilter's *Blow, blow, thou Winter Wind*, sung by George Baker. There followed a few records of music which it was felt would make an instant appeal, yet which were undoubtedly in the "good" category. These included Borodine's lovely *Nocturne* (Flonzaley Quartet); the *Prize Song* from the *Mastersingers* (McCormack); *Praeludium* (Järnefelt), played by the Queen's Hall Orchestra; and two Chaliapine items, *Song of Galitsky* and *In the Town of Kasan*. The paper ended with an appeal for music to be taken seriously; one could always get inferior stuff at cafés and cinemas; and in a society like this full advantage ought to be taken of the inestimable opportunity which the gramophone afforded of hearing fine music finely interpreted.

The literary portion was exceedingly well done, the case being presented in a clear, logical way, and in convincing style. The writer, who shared the views of Messrs. Wells and Turner, rendered some small assistance in choosing the records and supplying a few comments thereon. For this meeting the society were fortunate in securing, through the courtesy of Messrs. Thompson and Shackell, one of the new H.M.V. instruments. We also thank Messrs. Dale Forty for supplying the majority of the records.

On November 5th the programme was contributed by the members, each one bringing his or her favourite record. A very wide selection was presented, and, considering the nature of the affair, quite a good balance was obtained; the evening was highly successful and thoroughly enjoyable. At the close some of the new discs so graciously given by the Vocalion Co. were played, and had a good reception. The H.M.V. gramophone was kindly lent by Messrs. Godfrey.—TREVOR PRICE, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

On November 26th, at the Foresters' Hall, Charles Street, Miss Phyllis Beckett provided a Beethoven evening. At the outset Miss Beckett warned us that she was a "Beethoven fanatic," and, indeed, one very soon realised the depth of her great passion for the man and his music. The speaker supplied no ordinary stereotyped string of anecdotes followed by a haphazard selection of illustrations, but drew from a deep well of sure knowledge and gave us a swiftly moving talk, brimful of keen observations and flashes of unhackneyed thought. After some introductory remarks and a brief sketch of Beethoven's historical position, Miss Beckett mentioned the three periods into which his work is usually divided, and as examples of the first played the last two movements of the *Sonata Pathétique* (Wm. Murdoch) and two movements from the *Quartet in F, Op. 18, No. 1* (London String Quartet), this latter composition being preceded by a Haydn movement in order to show how the real Beethoven was beginning to peep through the Haydn-esque conventions.

The second period shows Beethoven in his prime, a mature

individualised artist, and the illustration chosen here was the *Fifth Symphony*, the third and fourth movements only being played. The version used was the recent one issued by Columbia; to me the tempi seemed a good deal too slow, and there was precious little mystery about that wonderful transitional passage into which the *Scherzo* plunges, but nothing could destroy the vigour of the glorious outburst which marks the opening of the *Finale*, and thereafter the interpretation was more spirited. Beethoven's third period was for long a subject of much controversy and heated discussion, but it is obvious to-day that in his last works, including the *Choral Symphony* and the quartets, op. 130 onwards, his powers grew mightier than ever. We heard the first movement of the *C sharp minor Quartet* (Lener String Quartette)—a stupendous piece of writing, monumental in its expression of human emotion. Repeated hearings are the only means of getting to the bottom of such a splendid thing as this. Miss Beckett has earned our sincere gratitude by the way in which she handled her subject. One felt that she was unnecessarily modest about her own capabilities—she certainly possessed a store of knowledge which would put to shame many an ordinary student of music.

Thanks are due to Mr. Kinshott for the gramophone, and to Messrs. Dale Forty for records. We are also pleased to acknowledge a further generous gift of records from the Vocalion Company. The society's stock of discs has grown considerably, so much so that a librarian is now essential, and Mr. L. F. Holloway has kindly consented to undertake this task.—TREVOR PRICE, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—An attraction of undoubted drawing power is requisite to assemble any considerable audience at a gramophone gathering during the rigours of a November night, and in choosing a Saturday evening in that month for his annual demonstration of H.M.V. records, Mr. Ivory reveals himself as an incorrigible optimist. Nevertheless this mood was completely justified by the appreciation of our members, who are wont to anticipate a feast of good things on these occasions. Our hon. president, Mr. Norman F. Hillyer, occupied the chair at the outset for the purpose of introducing the demonstrator, but forsook the dais for the auditorium immediately afterwards, as the position of the chair at the back of the amplifier is not conducive to appreciation of the programme. Mr. Ivory had brought his own H.M.V. gramophone, and, as a concession to the acoustic requirements of our hall, used steel needles, contrary to his ordinary domestic practice. The tenors among the vocal records were Fernand Anseau, Joseph Hislop, Martinelli, and Caruso. 'Twere difficult to discriminate between these celebrities except in a purely personal manner. Of baritones, Montanelli, whose name no longer figures in the H.M.V. catalogue, sang *Prologue* from *Pagliacci*, in excellent style; and De Gogorza, who is always a joy to hear for his full and clear tones, gave us *Teresia Mia*, a Spanish folk-song. Sopranos were strongly represented by Galli-Curci, who rippled like a rivulet in *Tacca la notte placida* from *Il Trovatore*, while her quaint English pronunciation of Bishop's *Pretty Mocking Bird* raised smiles all round; Frieda Hempel, Evelyn Scotney, Mary Lewis, a new luminant in the artistic firmament, Jeritza, and Dal Monte. The bass of Robert Radford in *Falstaff's Drinking Song*, admittedly a finished performance, had, however, according to the reception of the audience, to give way to Malcolm MacEachern, whose two songs from *Oberon in Fairyland* and *The Mighty Deep* were a veritable revelation of depth and volume. This item from the Vocalion list was announced by Mr. Ivory as an exception to the rest of his programme on account of its excellent character. Paderewski, Cortot, and Moiseivitch were the piano soloists, while Heifetz and Kreisler charmed the air with their poetry of vibration. The opportunity of comparing the old and new systems of H.M.V. recording were given by the playing of *Marche Militaire* (Schubert) and *La Boutique Fantasque* (Rossini), the latter being the new electric recording, and was greatly appreciated, the only criticism being of its slightly metallic tone. Both pieces were played by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra. Mr. Ivory had a tremendous reception and responded to the vote of thanks in a few well-chosen words. Next meeting: demonstration of gramophone and records by the Vocalion Co. All enquiries to Mr. L. Ivory, 34, Granville Road, Stroud Green, N.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

The Vocalion Company, through its representative, Mr. Kempton, gave a very attractive demonstration of records upon a Graduola instrument, at our meeting of Saturday, December 12th. The gramophone is an exceedingly efficient one, in which purity of tone is the outstanding feature. The Vocalion Company is becoming deservedly well-known for its achievement in the reproduction of what Mr. Kempton truly termed first-class music at second-class prices, to accommodate the majority, whose incomes have become attenuated at the dictates of high finance. The programme consisted of thirty records from the Vocalion catalogue, in which such artistes as Jelly d'Aranyi, Rosa Raisa, and Armand Tokatyan, Wassili Sapelnikoff, Luella Paikin, Adila Fachiri, John Coates, Sammons, Tertis and Hobday, the Spencer Dyke String Quartet, Malcolm McEachern, Elena Gerhardt, Evelyn Scotney, Frank Titterton, Roy Henderson, and others gave of their very best in their several departments. The playing of the records was followed with keen and appreciative attention, and the vote of thanks, which was proposed by the chairman, Mr. L. Ivory, was warmly carried. At our next meeting, January 9th, 1926, the programme will be furnished by four members who have not previously demonstrated here. Please address all enquiries to Mr. L. Ivory, 34, Granville Road, Stroud Green, N.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

THE GLASGOW AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

The third meeting of the session was held in the Ca'doro Restaurant, Union Street, on Monday, November 9th, Mr. James C. Stewart, president of the society, presiding over a large attendance. The evening was devoted to a recital of the New Edison gramophone, by Messrs. Murdoch, McKillop and Co., Ltd., the local agents, Miss Kemp, the firm's representative (and a member of the society) officiating. The programme submitted was a most varied and interesting one, composed entirely of Edison re-creations. Outstanding items in a good all-round programme were *Al pie de tu Ventana serenata*, sung in Spanish by Jose Mojica. The voice here was good and clear and there were no harsh sounds. There was good piano tone in the *Rigaudon* (Op. 49, No. 2) (McDowell), and *Schön Rosemarin* (Kreisler), played by Olga Steel, and the *Caro Nome* (*Rigoletto*), sung by Frieda Hempel. During the interval a demonstration of needle-cut records reproduced by means of the adaptor, was given at the suggestion of the chairman. The result was highly satisfactory and was much appreciated by the members. A new feature of our meetings, introduced by president Stewart, is the reproduction of selected low-priced records to illustrate the high quality of these records in comparison to the price. The society is growing in strength and popularity; such an organisation is a boon to gramophonists. It has established itself as one of our musical institutions making for a wider knowledge of the best music. Much has been done during the short period of its existence; much more can be done with greater support and a larger membership. Gramophonists and all interested are invited to communicate with the hon. secretary, 66, Prince Edward Street, S. 2, who will be pleased to furnish all information relative to the objects and terms of membership.—T. MACFARLANE, *Hon. Secretary*.

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

Through the courtesy of Messrs. Murdochs, the members were enabled to judge the qualities of the new model Beltona Peridulce gramophone, at the meeting held on Monday, November 16th. This instrument embodies several new constructional features. The sound-box is of the large type, fitted with a spring tensioned stylus and aluminium diaphragm stiffened by an annular process. The weight of the tone-arm is suitably counter-balanced by means of a weight moulded to the back of the tone-arm, a welcome innovation to reduce record wearage. The horn is constructed of a special non-resonating material which gives a mellow and natural reproduction, eliminating metallic or nasal effects. The following is an abridged list of the records played: *Spanish Dances* (Moszkowski), Band of H.M. Royal Air Force; *Largo al Factotum* (Rossini), Apollo Granforte; *Impromptu in B flat major* (Schubert), Paderewski; *Adeste Fideles*, 4,850 voices at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York; *Le Cygne* (Saint-Saëns), W. H. Squire; *Love's old sweet song*, Edna Thornton; *La Boutique Fantasque* (Rossini), Royal Albert Hall Orchestra. Messrs. Murdoch's representative was accorded a vote of thanks at the conclusion of the lecture-demonstration. During the interval our chairman, Mr. C. P. Welby-Wheeler, announced that Mr. Randal Phillips had presented the society with an album containing records of César Franck's *Symphony in B minor*, an important acquisition to the library. A further selection of records have been received from

the Vocalion Co., Ltd., and the Parlophone Co., Ltd., some of which have already been demonstrated before passing to the circulating library.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, *Hon. Press Secretary*.

THE DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—On November 12th the first ordinary meeting for the 1925-26 session was held at the society's new meeting room at Jury's Hotel. At the commencement of the meeting the hon. secretary read a letter from the Vocalion Company in which this company told the society that they intended to send every month a selection of records from their issues for the benefit of the members. This news came as a most agreeable surprise, and a very hearty vote of thanks and appreciation to the Vocalion Co. for their generosity was passed. It had been decided to employ these records to form a library, and accordingly the records comprising the first gift were duly issued to their first borrowers. It is unnecessary to describe the records, as they are fully dealt with in THE GRAMOPHONE and elsewhere; suffice it to say that the writer will not be in the least surprised to find that many members of the society will buy and make their own the records of the lovely Mozart *Violin Concerto in G*. The chief event of the evening was a lecture-demonstration on the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, by Mr. T. H. Weaving. Mr. Weaving is peculiarly fitted to speak on this subject as his work as musical director of a Dublin amateur operatic society has gained for him a very great experience of these operas, many of which have been produced with a success of high artistic value under his baton. He gave a short account of the lives of Gilbert and Sullivan relating some of the many anecdotes told in connection with their work and then proceeded to the operas, playing various records and pointing out the subtleties of Gilbert's stage-craft and drawing attention to musical points which many enthusiastic Gilbert and Sullivan lovers overlook through lack of close study of the scores. Throughout his lecture Mr. Weaving called particular attention to the marvellous way in which the music and words are welded together, as if the master minds of Gilbert and Sullivan worked together as one mighty brain. The records (kindly lent by Messrs. Brown Thomas and Co.) played during the evening were from the H.M.V. recordings of the operas, and were enjoyed by all; the H.M.S. *Pinafore* records being, in the writer's opinion, especially fine. The new model H.M.V. gramophone, kindly lent by Mr. Henecy, was heard by most members for the first time and the general opinion was that Mr. Compton Mackenzie does not exaggerate its powers, although there was no opportunity to hear it play records other than vocal.—NOEL C. WEBB, *Hon. Reporting Secretary*.

BLACKPOOL GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At our meeting on Wednesday, October 28th, at headquarters, Florence Café, the programme was in the hands of our new member, Mr. Waud, who provided a well-balanced selection of records, which he demonstrated on his Academy machine, which gave very good results. The programme included: *Ave Maria*; *Caro Nome*, by Bronskaja; *O Paradiso* (Cellini); duet, Courtland and Williams, *The moon hath raised*; *On with the Molley*, Browning Mummery; piano, Max Darewski, *Etude in F sharp*, reproduced splendidly. Part of the evening was taken up with selecting new officers for committee, etc., members regretting to hear of the retirement of Mr. Milne from the committee. A new chairman was elected in our enthusiastic member Mr. Waring. A few new members were enrolled. At the close a hearty vote of thanks were given to Mr. Waud for his kindness during the evening.

The programme for November 11th was given by our late chairman, Mr. Milne, with his own machine he provided a well-selected programme.

Any person in the Blackpool area interested in the society may obtain particulars from the secretary, R. Leather, Avonwold, Hemmingway, Blackpool.—WM. GRAINGER, *Recording Secretary*.

BRADFORD GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—An enthusiastic annual general meeting was held at the Church House, North Parade, by the Bradford and District Gramophone and Phonographic Society. It was unanimously decided that the society should carry on its business on the same lines as hitherto. New officials were appointed for the new session, Mr. H. Watson being elected president, Mr. Mawson vice-president, and Mr. H. Goldsmith, 18, Salt Street, Manningham, hon. secretary, to whom all communications should be addressed.

THE BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The December meeting was held on Tuesday, 1st inst., at headquarters, the New Morris Hall, Bedford Road, Clapham, S.W. The programme arranged for the evening was Wagnerian, a comprehensive one in

the hands of the musical director, Mr. J. Borders. The items played were excerpts from *The Ring*, *Mastersingers*, and *Parsifal*. Mr. Borders adding to the enjoyment of the music by giving a brief description of each particular scene. After the interval Mr. G. Webb continued his series of technical talks, taking for his subject the new H.M.V. sound-chamber; apparently this is a step in the right direction, though our lecturer doubted the wisdom of expecting the same type of sound-box to function on both large and small machines, irrespective of the length of amplifier involved. Owing to the length of the programme it was not possible to demonstrate many new issues, time available permitting of the following Parlophones: *Symphony in G minor* (Mozart), Opera House Orchestra; aria, *Queen of the Night*, *Magic Flute*, and *O, why so long delay?* (*Figaro*) (Mozart), Fritz Jökl. The next meeting, Tuesday, January 5th, is the annual general meeting; all members are earnestly requested to attend. After business has been dealt with there will be a members' record competition and a programme of Vocalion and Parlophone records.—S. N. COLLINS, *Reporting Secretary*.

THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.

—The fixtures for 1926 are as follows, subject to alteration. January 11th: "Johannes Brahms" (1833-1897), by Martin Kingslake, Esq. (organist of St. Mary Woolnoth, E.C.), and half an hour with Jan Kubelik. February 8th: "Choral Music," by Walter Yeomans, Esq. (principal of the H.M.V. Co.'s education dept.), and half an hour with Emilio de Gogorza. March 8th: "Some Operatic Comparisons," by Henry Lewis, Esq. (president), and half an hour with the Lener (String) Quartet. April 12th: "César Franck" (1882-1890), by Ernest Baker, Esq. ("Aiguille" of *The Musical Standard*), and half an hour with Emmy Destinn. May 10th: "More Dance and Ballet Music," by Ed. C. Coxall, Esq. (vice-president), and half an hour with Lionel Tertis. The programmes for June 14th, July 12th, and August 9th will be chosen by members on April 12th. September 13th: "An Evening with the Master of Bayreuth," by Henry Lewis, Esq. (president), and half an hour with the late Gervase Elwes. October 11th: "Folk Song," by Walter Yeomans, Esq. (principal of the H.M.V. Co.'s education dept.) and half an hour with Vladimir de Pachmann. November 8th: "More Modern British Music," by Ernest Baker, Esq. ("Aiguille" of *The Musical Standard*), and half an hour with Ernestine Schumann-Heink. December 13th: "Retrospect" and half an hour with the Virtuoso String Quartet. All communications should be addressed to the secretary, 34, Chalsey Road, Brockley, S.E. 4.

AGRICOLA GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—A well-attended meeting was held at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 10, Whitehall Place, on December 1st, 1925, to consider a proposal relative to the formation of a gramophone society under the auspices of the Ministry's Sports Association. Much enthusiasm was shown, and after it had been unanimously decided to proceed with the proposal, the following officers were elected: President, Mr. R. S. Langford; chairman, Mr. A. W. Knee; vice-chairman, Mr. H. G. Huckel; hon. secretary and treasurer, Mr. E. U. Brockway; committee, Mr. E. F. Flanders and Mr. H. Garside. The first meeting of the society will be held on December 15th, subsequent meetings to be held on the second Tuesday in each month.

The society acknowledges, with many thanks, the offers of support and assistance which have been received from the Gramophone Co., Ltd., Messrs. Alfred Imhof, and Mr. Russell, of the Gramophone Exchange, while thanks are also due to the Vocalion Company for having agreed to forward to the society each month a selection from the new issues of Vocalion and Aco records. The society is, so far as its officers are aware, the first of its kind to be formed within the Civil Service, and as a result of the keenness shown at the preliminary meeting, looks forward to a successful future. All communications should be addressed to the hon. secretary, at the Office of Commissioners of Crown Lands, 1, Whitehall, S.W. 1.—EDWARD U. BROCKWAY, *Hon. Secretary*.

CANTERBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.

—On Wednesday, November 16th, at Gaywood's Rooms, the society's programme took the form of a demonstration of latest issues of Parlophone and Vocalion records kindly sent us by the respective firms. The machine used was the latest H.M.V. table grand, lent by Messrs. Goulden. The records were received with the usual approval, the favourites being: Mozart's *Concerto No. 3 in G* and Malcolm MacEachern's *Sperati o figli* (Vocalion); the

Irmeler Madrigal Choir record and the soprano record of Fritz Jökl (Parlophone). The members present seemed particularly interested in the new product of the H.M.V. factory, the low C at the end of Malcolm MacEachern's song being exceptionally fine on this machine. During the interval the "4,850 voice" Columbia record was played and enjoyed by all present.—S. F. WAKE, *Hon. Secretary*.

DEWSBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The winter session is now in full swing, and there was an excellent attendance at the Church House, Dewsbury, on November 10th, when Mr. S. Brasher provided the programme for the evening, the subject dealt with being "Music of Various Nations."

[Report of Mr. Brasher's lecture is omitted with regret.—Ed.]

A demonstration by Mr. G. H. Hirst, the society's president and a great authority on Wagner, is looked upon as one of the star events of the season, and November 24th saw a goodly turn-up at the Moot Hall for an open meeting. Mr. Hirst, using a large model of the new H.M.V., kindly loaned by Mr. J. T. Auty, of Dewsbury, divided his programme into two parts, the first dealing with Elgar's *E flat Symphony* and German's *Gypsy Suite*, Bach's *C minor Fugue* for orchestra, by Elgar, and finally César Franck's *Symphonic Variations*, by De Greef and the R.A.H. Orchestra. The reproducing of each record was heralded by masterly annotations and the musical value of the lecture greatly enhanced by enlightenment as to the working-out of the themes given by Mr. Hirst on a concert grand. The second part and most eagerly anticipated, dealt wholly with Wagner, and one becomes aware that in Mr. Hirst the work of the great master received capable and satisfying exposition. The works specially covered were the *Meistersinger* and *Parsifal*, the Grail Scene records being exceptionally successful on the new model used. The records of the César Franck *Variations Symphoniques* and the Grail Scene (*Parsifal*), all H.M.V., may be recommended to discerning collectors of good music. In conclusion Mr. Hirst spoke of the value of the gramophone society if advantage is fully taken of its facility for advancing the cause of music and musical knowledge, but in broad terms hinted at the futility of using a society for entertainment only. Mrs. Holborn, one of the ladies elected to the committee, voiced the hearty appreciation of all present. Further particulars may be had on applying to the secretary.—MR. K. WALKER, 2, Clement Terrace, Savile Town, Dewsbury.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONO-GRAPH SOCIETY.

—The members of the Liverpool Society—ever disinclined to do things by halves in matters gramophonic—have attended, in force, no less than three meetings in the space of twenty odd days. To attempt to compress an adequate report of the meetings within the limits prescribed by an imperious lord of the blue pencil "were a task as rash as ridiculous." Therefore, though to be bright may be denied to us, we must, willy nilly, be brief.

The programme presented by Mr. H. Ballantine, on November 9th, was exclusively "Parlophone," uniformly excellent and demonstrated that the artistic and interpretive gifts of the artists were of a high order. In a record of 'Tis but a love song from *Tales of Hoffmann*, by Emmy Bettendorf and Eugen Transky, the soprano sings the part of the frail Antonia very appealingly and realistically; in Mendelssohn's familiar *Concerto in E minor* Juan Manen plays with great spirit and renders the florid passages in fine fashion; whilst the singing of the Irmeler Choir in *Komm susser Tod* is deeply emotional and impressive in conception and performance.

At the meeting on November 23rd a "Pick of the Basket" programme was submitted; an attempt to present the finest records available in each class. It was a great collection and a musical treat.

On December 2nd, at the invitation of Mr. Cyril Davis (of Davis's Music Stores, Ltd.), the society were entertained at the new Lord Street salon. Mr. Davis, as always, gave an admirably chosen and well-arranged programme of choice records. The artistic appointments and acoustic properties of the new salon elicited much favourable comment. The kindness of Mr. Davis in providing refreshments and souvenir programmes was highly appreciated.

At all three meetings the new H.M.V. instrument was used. Considerations of space oblige one to defer comment, but it may be mentioned in passing that the Liverpool members, with but few exceptions, have grappled it to their affections with growing enthusiasm. It is conceded that nothing of greater importance has appeared during the past decade and the potentialities are of significance.—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

CANNOCK CHASE GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—A meeting and recital of records was held in the Link Room, Chadsmoor, at 7 p.m., on Monday, November 30th. Mr. Allman kindly provided an His Master's Voice gramophone with a Luxus sound-box and also a Saturn. Mr. S. E. Willetts provided the programme. The Lener String Quartet in Mozart's *C major Quartet* complete on four 12in. records; the Southport Corporation Military Band; Amelita Galli-Curci; Renée Chemet, violin; Titta Ruffo, baritone; Harold Samuel, piano; and Ben Lawes (humorous). Interest was caused in comparing the qualities of the H.M.V. Exhibition and the Luxus boxes. The next meeting will be on Monday, December 14th, when one of our lady friends had kindly offered to provide coffee. Mr. G. Owen is lending us his Academy Cabinet gramophone with a Superb sound-box.—S. E. WILLETTTS, *Secretary*.

[Further reports from Agricola G.S., Manchester G.S., Blackpool G.S., North-West G.S., Dewsbury G.S., Cardiff and District G.S., Dublin G.S., Leeds G. and P.S., and East London G.S. are held over with regret.—ED.]



BOOK REVIEWS

MUSIC AND ITS CREATORS. By Neville d'Esterre. (George Allen & Unwin, 6s.)

Mr. Rorke was one of the first of the recent amateur writers to give us a book of clear-sighted ideas about music. Many others have taken a hand, notably the distinguished Editor of this journal. Dr. Agnes Savile added some points of view in her interesting book about music, medicine, and life; and now Mr. d'Esterre worthily takes his place among wide-thinking amateurs. He engages the sympathy of the professional man at once. He is all for ordered thinking; for the warm heart, but the cool head. He found a rallying point, early in his experience, in Sullivan. The Proms. and the pianola allowed him to clarify his ideas, that he presents with many an interesting literary allusion and analogy. Of the gramophone he says little. He thinks that it will never bring salvation to the inquirer. He stresses the untrue reproduction. "The element of personality is missing," he adds. I think he is hard on the instrument. The drawback of the pianola is that you are cut off from orchestral music. We can't all have the Proms. at our door. Used with immense care, and with frequent reference to the real thing at "first ear," the gramophone is as great an educative means as the pianola. There ought to be courses in its use, and those who are new to the instrument ought, ideally, to go through a period of practice, under the guidance of a trained musician who knows it as well as it can be known.

Mr. d'Esterre says some good things. Speaking of the "lusty choral bellowing" at school, he says "It was the cult of violence without passion . . . ; it leads by easy stages to false sentiment." "Beauty is the expression of human happiness; and art expresses beauty." (Let us not stay to ask "What is beauty?" and to question certain modern forms of art.) He tells how Tchaikovsky "overwhelmed" him. "Had anything so bold ever been conceived, anything so stupendous" as the *Pathetic*, he used to ask, and answers: "Yes, it had, by Bach, by Beethoven, by Wagner; only a hundred times bolder and more stupendous. But it did not take hold of you in the crowded street, as it were, like Tchaikovsky's music." He is acute about the effect of second or third-rate music on those who have not a great background of experience. A good reasoner, and a man of sensitive feeling; almost one's ideal amateur, one would say—keen and catholic, but, Paul-like, proving all things and holding fast only to those that pass the most stringent tests. He wisely distinguishes between the way in which the person who cannot study scores judges music and that in which the trained man works. He realises the inevitable limitations of the man who cannot judge by all methods. Here is wisdom; to the point (so often made) that truly musical people "recognise the superiority of Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin . . . instinctively, at the very outset of their career," he answers that "unless they are gifted at that outset with a remarkably precocious genius, they just don't. They may say they do. They may behave as if they do. They may even believe they do. But in reality they don't. . . . The neophyte . . . can like Chopin. . . . He can no more understand Chopin that he can understand Swinburne. . . . He enjoys Chopin's music, or some of it, but without comprehension."

I could quote many more good sayings in this book. The author has worked hard, thought clearly, and loved music much. To those on the same path, like-minded to work and think, this will be a very stimulating and companionable book.

K. K.

* * *

BEETHOVEN. By Paul Bekker. Translated and adapted from the German by M. M. Bozman. (Dent, 10s. 6d.)

It is surprising how long we have been without translations of good foreign works on music. This on Beethoven is written by a distinguished German critic, who has had some excellent practical experience as a violinist and conductor. The book, written in 1911, when Bekker was only twenty-nine, is full of clearly-stated ideas, nearly all of which are illuminating exceedingly. There is an odd phrase or two here and there, as when (page 85) he speaks of Bach's "somewhat over-subtle" intellect; but here is some of the soundest sense about a great composer that I have seen. He distinguishes between Beethoven the man and Beethoven the artist, spending comparatively little space (but spending it well) on biographical matter and consideration of the composer's personality, and putting in an excellent chapter on "The Poetic Idea," which deals with the philosophy of the music, and its conditions of creation. As to the personality, he is frank, without being brutal. Far too long have pretty legends obscured the reality of composers; far too often have we accepted the tale that this, that, or the other work was the outcome of some mood or experience. Sometimes it was; oftener it wasn't. The great composer is much of an actor. He presents and represents not just his moods, but works of art. Beethoven's works, as Mr. Bekker interestingly shows, often went in pairs, each work quite distinct in style from that of its stable companion. Artistic reaction, not merely change of circumstances or reaction to the world's buffetings or smiles, accounted for the differences. It is the business of the artist to get outside the world. The smaller man gets outside less frequently than the really big man. Where is Bach's reaction to circumstances? There is precious little of it in his music. Mr. Bekker's analysis of Beethoven's works is extremely good. Here and there is a curious conceit. He speaks, for instance, of the "caustic wit" of the introduction to the last movement of the first symphony—the little bit of tune that runs up, a little farther each time, till it gets into its stride in the rondo subject. Bekker sees here a parody of the pathos of the *Adagio*—a new idea to me. But his studies of the music are eminently sound and informative, not the least bit dry, but full of meat and interest. He goes through practically the whole of the music, and the gramophile who is rejoicing in these days that so many Beethoven works are being recorded will find the volume a splendid commentary on them. We need more such works. A great deal of the music of the masters is only annotated (and then often rather technically and drily) in concert programmes. THE GRAMOPHONE's reviewers try to make up some of the gaps. Mr. Bekker provides a heap of good reading for the thoughtful hearer. Who will do the same for others of the great masters? Little has been written about the music of anyone save Wagner and one or two others. If all the books are as well written as this, we shall be glad to fork out half a guinea a time, and consider it well spent.

K. K.

THOUGHTS ON MUSIC

Compiled by HERVEY ELWES.

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FROM

THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith St., London, W.1

ROBIN LEGGE in the *Daily Telegraph* says:—

"A most desirable book Many of the criticisms drawn together under one roof, as it were, are of utmost value, the very crystallisation of criticism. The author has done his work well indeed."

Analytical Notes and First Reviews

CHAMBER MUSIC

COLUMBIA.—L.1691-1694 (four 12in. records in album, 26s.).—**Lener String Quartet: Quartet in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2** (Brahms). Miniature score, Eulenburg or Philharmonia.

Mr. Fuller Maitland relates of this quartet, in his book on Brahms, that "it contains in its first notes the virtual dedication to Joachim, although the two quartets (forming Op. 51) are dedicated ostensibly to Dr. Billoth. The notes F. A. E., standing for 'Frei aber einsam' represent the motto which stood with Joachim for the ideal of his career. The quartets were brought out during a short period of estrangement between Joachim and Brahms, and the treatment of Joachim's artistic motto in this way had its share in bringing about a reconciliation." The above facts may well account for the genial and very melodious nature of this quartet which will ensure it a wider welcome than was accorded to the more austere work in C minor. As always with such a fine craftsman as Brahms there are no loose ends, nothing is wasted. A good instance of his workmanship occurs in the last movement, where the little two-note phrase heard first at the close of the second subject, and several times subsequently, is exquisitely expanded just before the coda, at which also the main theme of the movement suddenly reveals its resemblance to the F.A.E. theme; a beautiful summing-up of the whole purpose of the work. Attention must also be drawn to the Ländler-like second tune of the first movement—similar in this respect to that in the sextet and to the rich, tender, beauty of the second movement. The way in which the first tune of this movement gradually gets under way after two reluctant pauses is most captivating.

As the work is fully analysed in the Columbia album there is no further need to allude to its structure here.

One or two readers are calling for a more detailed notice of the recording without having, apparently, considered the exceptional difficulty of doing this. To carry it out properly constant reference would have to be made to the score, an almost bar by bar reference; a practice which surely would weary and exasperate the majority of readers.

Therefore, until this matter has been thoroughly thrashed out, I shall content myself, and also my readers, I trust, with making again the oft written criticism of the too great prominence of the leader of the quartet, though this is certainly less than usual, and the general weakness of the 'cello part. Indeed, each part should have the same depth of recording that the first violin achieves. This will, no doubt, now be possible. Triplet accompaniments, which are such a feature of the first movement, always seem to sound rather muddy and these are no exceptions. The dark tone of the viola tells beautifully, as on page 5, line 3, and, very notably, page 26, the last line. For the benefit of scoreless readers these passages are the last appearance of the second theme, Part II. and Part VIII., the viola's first playing of the first theme just after the start.

The second movement is very successful recording; all the parts sound beautifully welded together and sonorous, but, for some reason, the final three chords sound as one long chord.

The interpretation and general effect seem to me excellent, and if anyone gives me this quartet for a Christmas present I shall be exceedingly grateful! It will make an admirable gift for actual or potential Brahmins.

Following the Score. (Eulenburg, G. and T., 2s.).—First Movement: Part I. to page 9, line 1, bar 3; Part II., bar 4 to end. Second Movement: Part III. to page 17, line 4, bar 2; Part IV., bar 3 to end. Third Movement: Part V. to page 23, end of line 2; Part VI., line 3 to end. Fourth Movement: Part VI. to page 31, line 3, bar 2; Part VIII., bar 4 to end.

N. P.

BRUNSWICK.—20040 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**The New York String Quartet: Quartet in G minor, Parts 1 and 2** (Grieg).

Grieg's pretty tunes are not well adapted to the revealing medium of the string quartet, and his writing in Part II. of this record is much more orchestral than pure string quartet writing. The interest is maintained chiefly by tunes set in contrast, according

to Grieg's usual receipt, but the result is certainly not without charm; even though it be not "War." The recording, though the imperfect centring of my copy caused a wobble at the end, is full and brilliant. But, of course, the music offers no such problem as the Brahms work. The labelling, by the way, gives no indication of the movements recorded. It is rather late in the day to have to draw attention to such a matter. Many people will no doubt be glad to have a copy of this melodious, well-played music.

N.P.

ORCHESTRAL

COLUMBIA.

L.1686, 1687, 1688, and 1689 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—**W. Murdoch and Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Harty: Third Piano Concerto in C minor, Op. 37** (Beethoven). Eulenburg min. score; also in Philharmonia.

L.1684 and 1685 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—**New Queen's Hall Orchestra, conducted by Wood: Suite No. 6** (Bach, arr. Wood).

PARLOPHONE.

E.10392, 10393, and 10394 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Orchestra of the State Opera House, conducted by Dr. Weissman: Symphony in E flat** (Mozart). Eulenburg and Philharmonia.

E.10390 and 10391 (12in., 4s. 6d. each).—**Orchestra of the State Opera House, conducted by Ed. Moerike: Introduction to Act I, Parts 1, 2, and 3, and Introduction to Act III of Tristan** (Wagner).

BELTONA.

5005 (12in., 4s.).—**Langham Symphony Orchestra: Rakoczy March** (Berlioz) and **Ride of the Valkyries** (Wagner).

5007 (12in., 4s.).—**Langham Symphony Orchestra: Marche Slav** (Tchaikovsky) and **Bacchanale** from **Samson and Delilah** (Saint-Saëns).

DUOPHONE.

A.1021 (12in., 4s.).—**Mackenzie Rogan's Symphony Orchestra: The Gypsy Suite** (E. German).

A.1023 (12in., 4s.).—**Melody Caprice** (Squire) and **The Wedding of the Rose** (Jessel).

BRUNSWICK.

50067 (12in., 8s.).—**Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra** (New York): **Prelude and Intermezzo** from **Cavalleria Rusticana** (Mascagni).

Columbia.—The album containing the concerto gives some analytical notes. The work, we need to remember, belongs to the period of the first symphony and the earliest quartets. Then we see how, building on Mozartian lines, Beethoven at 30 adds felicities and foreshadows some of his later developments—in particular the combination of sonata and rondo forms, that is notable in the section of the final movement that begins at page 75 of the Eulenburg score. Later, in the last of the five piano concertos, he worked out that plan more fully. His *cadenzas* are a happy feature of the rondo. That which Murdoch interpolates on side four is more agreeable than are most flights of (generally) some minor composer's fancy. The time has come, I think, when any *cadenzas* save those written out by the composer and used as organic parts of the work should be put aside. That rondo contains quite a lot of hints that here is no mere successor of Mozart, merely carrying on all the traditions. That passage (pages 89 to 91) beginning with the mysterious repetitions of the A flat that becomes G sharp, shows an original mind at work.

The work is extremely enjoyable from every point of view. The recording does not quite come up to the highest standard. Murdoch's tone is far more varied than this recording suggests. I feel we lose a good deal of his quality. The piano tone is seldom rich and is scarcely ever above a quite mild *forte*. The balance between orchestra and soloist is, on the whole, good, but the string bass is rarely sufficiently solid. The orchestra is not always absolutely on time, as a body. This recording is rather disappointing, though, as there will probably not be another just yet, it is worth getting in order to have such an agreeable Beethoven work at hand.

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Breaks : Side 1, page 11, last bar ; side 2, page 24, bar 7 ; side 3, page 40, last bar ; side 4, end of first movement ; side 5, page 56, bar 3 ; side 6, end of Largo ; side 7, page 86, line 2, bar 2.

Sir Henry Wood's orchestral arrangements have helped not a little to make the beauties of Bach known to the Prom-goer. Of late years the programmes of these summer concerts have contained more Bach and Handel, Haydn and Mozart, than ever before. This suite shows Sir Henry's skill in orchestration. He makes the most of the colours at his disposal, and is perhaps a trifle over-fond of gorgeousness ; but Bach can stand a lot of good healthy colouring, and even the massive treatment of the Gavotte (No. 4 in this suite) can be justified.

The Prelude is from the "48," No. 3 in Book I. Sir Henry has said that he orchestrated this on a summer's day in a wood, when the thousand tiny sounds of busy creatures chimed with the dancing rhythm of the music. Three flutes, bassoon, and horn sustain the chords. The strings (muted) are in this recording rather too weak in the lower register, though they come out quite well at Queen's Hall. A neat point is the treatment of the last three chords, which are not, for once, smitten out, but pulsed gently forth, to round off the mood.

The Lament is from one of Bach's very rare essays in "programme" music—the "Capriccio on the departure of a beloved brother" (who was going off to the wars). This, by the way, is a capital keyboard piece, full of varied mood-music. A bass of four bars is repeated throughout. The wood-wind's broken phrases, over horn harmony, are really moving. Bach was ever able to touch the heart—so simply. How few of the moderns care to try!

The Scherzo is from the third of the keyboard Partitas. This is exhilarating, loud, clear, and full of the joy of life.

The Gavotte and Musette come from the Sixth English Suite. This is a Gavotte as it might have been danced by the toe-pointing Professor Challenger, of Conan Doyle's "Lost World"—massively ceremonious. The second Gavotte, on a drone bass (called Musette, after the ancient bagpipe), is for oboe, viola, and horn, with the drone gently in evidence. No. 5 is scored for wind only. Sir Henry has said that this (Prelude 22 from the 48, Book I.) suggests to him "a little Gothic side-chapel in which one lonely figure is praying fervently . . . I never could get the atmosphere of half darkness, of mystical fervour and resignation from the pianoforte ; and it occurred to me that only the colour and fragrance of wood-wind instruments could effect what I wanted."

Sir Henry Wood has a capacity for self-expression, in words as well as in music, that we hope he will use more frequently in print. We remember his illuminating article on orchestration in the new Dent dictionary. What about a book on this subject, Sir Henry?

The Finale is in Bach's best vein of rejoicing. He uses this piece more than once—in the *Keyboard Suite in E*, and in the cantata, *Nun danket*, and in the third Partita for violin. The running parts are a trifle thin at moments. We need rather more fiddlers to make our mounting jubilation complete. Even as it is, we can enjoy the music with great gusto. I do not envy the man who can hear this Finale without itching to blow a trumpet or beat a drum, or in some way bear a personal part in a rejoicing so healthy, sweet, and altogether comely.

Parlophone.—The Mozart *E flat Symphony* was annotated in the issue of September 1924. Amazing to think that this work, the *Jupiter*, and the *G minor* were written all in less than three months. The *E flat* was finished on June 26th, 1788, the *G minor* on July 25th, and the *C major* on August 10th. This performance is about the best thing Parlophone has done. The force employed sounds large ; there is ample volume and virility. I like it immensely—better than any other recording I know. There is rather a lot of surface scratch, though not a distressing amount.

In the slow movement I feel that the very fine delicacies of rhythm, though they are as well caught as in any orchestral performance I have heard, just, in the last event, elude any body of players. These Opera House players are well unified. On the whole, they are a trifle hefty in this movement, for my choice, though they play richly.

The last movement is not, as sometimes happens, taken so fast that it has not time to "speak." The fiddles are not buried anywhere. The full wind is just a little under the weather, tonally, but it is an improvement on former Parlophone tone. Those Haydnish tossings about of the theme from one department of the orchestra to the other seem in one place in the exposition and in the corresponding place in the recapitulation to be less vital than elsewhere. The music softens and is slowed down a trifle by this conductor. It is only for a moment, and the vigorous style

holds sway, to our great satisfaction. Certainly these are records to get. One of Mozart's finest symphonies for 13s. 6d. ; is not that a bargain?

Wagner stated the basic idea of the *Tristan Prelude* to be that of the ecstasy of love and the longing for death, in which alone it can find fulfilment. The theme of the lovers comes first (the opening four-note phrase, on the last note of which is superposed a poignant chromatic answering phrase). The Love Glance motive (with its three ascending scale-notes and a drop of a seventh) follows. This is associated with the first meeting, on the ship. Tristan's longing is a third theme, and the emotion rises to a climax at the Love Potion melody, into which the music sweeps with an upward scale rush, and that is repeated a note higher. This is a worthy performance of one of the most wonderful pages in all Wagner, that is, however, but a foretaste of his marvellous power of weaving and blending motives in the drama itself. The detail is almost too clear here ; the sounds "stand off" from each other a little, but that is a small point, and probably will be scarcely noticed on some machines.

The Prelude to the third act contains that strange foreboding piping, surely the most mournful that ever shepherd made. An analysis of how it achieves its effect is a most interesting thing, too long to make here. It sounds full-bodied in the record, and the cor anglais, as usually is the case, does not come out quite nasally enough. Its sting is not as that of the oboe, but with its contralto sadness should go a little capacity for the natural expression, by tone-colour alone, of sorrow or regret. That is why Wagner chose it, of course.

Beltona.—Berlioz wrote the *Rakoczy March* while in Hungary in 1845, and added it to his *Faust* because it was such a success. It was easy enough to transport *Faust* to Hungary so as to bring in the March plausibly. The original march was written by a military bandmaster names Ruzicka. This is quite a good performance, with one or two effective drum strokes. Some tightening up of the rhythm is still possible, I think.

The Valkyries, on the other side, are quite remarkable creatures. This is the fullest-toned record of the *Ride* that I know. Somewhat disjunct, but for vigour and the impression of the superhuman in music it would be difficult to beat this record. I wonder if the orchestration is exactly Wagner's?

The other Beltona records are almost equally sonorous. Tchaikovsky's march was written for a concert in aid of the wounded in the war between Serbia and Turkey, in which the cause of Serbia aroused much sympathy among other Slavs. There is a funereal air about the opening theme, to which is soon added a note of martial fervour. In the Trio national dances are suggested. The Russian national hymn comes in in the bass, and then in the melody. This is not a distinguished work, but it is quite a good sample of Tchaikovsky. The percussion is powerful, in these discs. I should like to hear what the Langham Orchestra can do with gentler music. They are distinctly able, in these forceful pieces.

Duophone.—These records contain competent playing. Two movements only of German's suite are given. Pleasant light recreational music this, very well presented in bright colours. The Squire and Jessel pieces are good enough for marching to, but they contain nothing of musical interest.

Brunswick.—An expensive record, which I find rather shrieky, but that is partly the composer's fault. There is plenty of red blood in the music, and a little thunder. The softer bits are well bodied.

K. K.

INSTRUMENTAL

PIANOFORTE.

LEOPOLD GODOWSKY.—The Golliwog's Cake-walk and Minstrels (Debussy). Brunswick 15105 (10in., 5s. 6d.).

LEWIS RICHARDS.—The Harmonious Blacksmith (Handel) and Turkish March (Mozart). Brunswick 2930 (10in., 3s.).

VIOLIN.

MISHEL PIASTRO.—Serenade in G (Arensky) and Irish Lament (Franco). Brunswick 10209 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

MAYER GORDON.—Le Cygne (Saint-Saëns) and Simple Aven (Thomé). Columbia 3830 (10in., 7s. 6d.).

YOVANOVITCH BRATZA.—Menuett (Handel-Burmester) and Rosamunde Ballet Music (Schubert-Kreisler). Columbia D.1529 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

RENEE CHEMET.—Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso (Saint-Saëns). H.M.V., D.B.887 (12in., 5s. 6d.).

'CELLO.

W. H. SQUIRE.—*Mazurka and Harlequin* (Popper). Columbia L.1690 (12in., 6s. 6d.).

SUGGIA.—*Sonata in A* (Boccherini, arr. Piatti). H.M.V., D.B.856 (12in., 8s. 6d.).

MISCELLANEOUS.

C. WHITAKER-WILSON (church organ): *Christians, awake, While Shepherds watched, The first Nowell, and O come all ye faithful*. H.M.V., B.2196 (10in., 3s.).

CHERNIAVSKY TRIO (violin, 'cello, and piano): *Peer Gynt Suite, No. 1*. Columbia 3735 and 3736 (10in., 3s.).

Godowsky.—Piquant exceedingly. Some notes are a little clanky, but the tone is much better than the new clanginess of last month's Pachmann, for example. Godowsky makes the Golliwog a trifle military—or is the stuffed doll only trying to be trim? It is a happy conception, any way. So is the other.

Lewis Richards.—Remarkable sonority for a harpsichord. The sounds sustain more than I expected, too. To anyone who has not heard the instrument this record, which "flatters" the harpsichord, would not give quite a right impression. The knitting-needle noises are not prominent. The pace is greater than usual, but I like it. The piece has so little in it that it needs some sort of treatment to keep it from being dull. The Blacksmith (as I suppose nearly everyone now knows) existed only in the person of a publisher, long after the piece was made, who had been at this trade in earlier years, and who thought that a fancy title would help to sell the piece. The Mozart is extremely effective. This janizary music, with drum effect complete, is a quaint bit with which to end a sonata.

Mishel Piastro.—The violin tone is sonorous, and a little hard-edged. The Irish air is not badly treated. Arensky's *Serenade* is showy, light music. A soft needle for this vigorous player.

Mayer Gordon.—*Le Cygne* goes best on the 'cello. Mr. Gordon plays it purely and unaffectedly. The Thomé confession lingers still. For those who like sentimental tunes these are good samples. The performance could not well be bettered.

Bralza.—He plays with the Handel tune prettily. The treatment justifies itself. I like less his treatment of Schubert—the best-known bit of ballet music, that beginning with the arpeggio figure, d : d. s, | d : d. s, | d : m | s. The rhythm is knocked about too much.

René Chemet.—The piece was written for violin and orchestra (Op. 28). Something is lost in the arrangement for violin and piano. Miss Chemet concentrates attention on her part, using all sorts of devices to stir the dry bones of music such as this. She is very capable, but seems to be working just a little too hard. Perhaps that is the only thing to do—work hard and try to disguise the music's poverty.

W. H. Squire.—Bold and buccaneer-like, as usual. I do not like the liberties he takes with melodies, sentimentalising them. For things of this kind all that is wanted is the sort of ability for exploiting the instrument that this player has at his finger tips. But when are we to have some decent 'cello music recorded? And why all the threadbare old things from the fiddlers? Has none of them a bit of pluck, and a bit more artistic sense?

Suggia is almost at her best in this excellent recording, but, as is so often the case with 'cellists, she plays music that is of precious little value. Listen to the feeble sequential treatment that time and again crops up in this record. The device in itself is excellent. Its unimaginative and unresourceful use is what I complain of. 'Tis pedestrian stuff, this sonata, but apparently anything is good enough for some players. How to reconcile their fine artistry in music that really matters (which they do, we gladly admit, often play) with their choice of this fustian? Actors are said to be poor judges of plays, as a rule. Long experience convinces me that there are, amazingly frequently, serious flaws in the fine player's capacity to judge works of art.

C. Whitaker-Wilson.—Here is an advance indeed—an organ that really sounds like one, some of the time. When it doesn't, the fault is the player's. He commits many errors of taste—that swell-pedal pumping in the middle of *Christians awake* is a bad one, and the use of the dreadful stop, or combination of stops, in this same piece is vile. It is our old enemy Vox Humana, I believe; someone called it "A goat with the asthma, in the attic." The feeble joinings-up of the other tunes are in the approved vamping manner. Rhythm is not well kept in some places. These remarks

will, I hope, move our recording friends to use care in their choice of players. We want to hear some of our best British players. Let us have a good supply of Bach, to begin with. It may be necessary to build a special instrument, in order to get the best results. Some acoustical problems exist, and overtones record oddly. Mixture stops, especially, will need much manipulation. Quite a big work I expect it will be, to get the best of the organ's tone on to the disc, and keep out disturbances. The new recording allows us to hear an instrument in something like proper proportion, for the first time. I can't find the deeper pedal stops. (Were they used?) In good time we shall hear fine things in this new direction. I congratulate H.M.V. on these first sounds, but beg them, again, to get really good players.

Cherniavsky Trio.—Too much urgency and stress for *Morning*. I don't see much point in arranging such a suite. Rhythm is groggy. Some of Grieg's notes are quite out of time. Richer tone is wanted for *Asse's Death*, and more body. What can three people do with the final imps' dance? They are impotent.

K. K.

OPERATIC

RICCARDO STRACCIARI (baritone): *Brindisi* and *Il Sogno* from *Otello* (Verdi). In Italian. Col. X.332, 10in., 6s.

KEDROFF MALE QUARTET (unaccompanied): *Church Bells of Novgorod* (Russian folk-song) and *Introduction to A Life for the Czar* (Glinka). In Russian. Col. D.1530, 10in., 4s. 6d.

ARISTODEMO GIORGINI (tenor).—*Ridi, Pagliacci* from *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo) and *In povetà mia lieta* from *La Bohème* (Puccini). Actuelle 15209.

LYSE CHARNY (contralto).—*Air des Larmes* from *Werther* (Massenet) and *Seguidilla* from *Carmen* (Bizet). Actuelle 15209.

HERBERT TEALE (tenor).—*Lohengrin's Narration* from *Lohengrin* (Wagner) and *Lend me your aid* from *La Reine de Saba* (Gounod). Beltona 7001, 12in., 4s. 6d.

LOTTE LEHMANN (soprano) and **HEINRICH SCHLUSNUS** (baritone).—*Reich mir die Hand* from *Don Giovanni* (Mozart) and *So lang hab ich geschmachtet* from *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Mozart). Polydor 72933.

AMELITA GALLI-CURCI (soprano) and **TITO SCHIPA** (tenor).—*Un di, felice, eterea* and *Parigi o cara* from *La Traviata* (Verdi). H.M.V., D.A.711, 10in., 6s.

Riccardo Stracciari.—Verdi's *Otello* is gradually but surely winning its way to the place it deserves in the hearts of opera-lovers in this country. All the best things in the score are now to be heard on the gramophone, and here we have two of Iago's few detachable pages, apart from the *Credo*—namely, the *Brindisi*, or Drinking Song, in Act I., and the passage from the duet with Otello in Act II., where the Moor's traitorous "ancient" first awakens the "green-eyed monster" by his story of what he overheard Cassio mutter in his dream about Desdemona. Both are short, but full of colour. The Drinking Song, a macabre sort of ditty, trolled forth by Iago amid the gathering storm, primarily to encourage Roderigo to get tipsy, is sung with abundant spirit. The *Sogno*, or dream, is related with the right degree of subtlety and a striking contrast in the voices of the two speakers. In each Stracciari shows what an artist he is.

Kedroff Male Quartet.—These are not in any sense operatic records, but I have been asked to say a word about them. The quartet is now well known here, and this disc will make still wider the appreciation of its magnificent tone and intensely Russian singing, thanks to excellent recording and a faultless interpretation of two of the quartet's choicest numbers. The imitation of deep, booming church bells by human voices is extraordinarily realistic, particularly towards the end, where they slowly die away. The Glinka *Introduction* from his famous opera, *A Life for the Czar*, combines a tenor solo in a plain-song chant with some fine four-part harmony sung by voices of amazing amplitude and richness, always in perfect tune. The effect is simply overpowering.

Aristodemo Giorgini.—There can be no doubt concerning the claims of this tenor—a Greek, apparently, with an Italianised *nom de théâtre*—to an attentive hearing. He possesses an abundance of tone of telling quality and sings with a lot of dramatic fire, besides commanding a capital high C. But his records puzzle me, especially the *Ridi, Pagliacci*, which floats off the pitch and on again in the strangest way. I have tried it over two or three times and always

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SELECTIONS FROM JANUARY LIST.

G 15847	Banks of Allan Water (acc. Clutsum). Piano Acc.	Thea Phillips (Soprano)
	She wandered down the mountain side (Frederick Clay). Piano Acc.	
G 15848	The Leather Bottle (arr. Clutsum). Piano Acc.	John Thorne (Baritone)
	The Emigrant (Graham Peel). Piano Acc.	
G 15819	Simon the Cellarer (J. L. Hatton). Orch. Acc.	Hamilton Harris (Bass)
	Down in the Deep (Harding Hatton). Orch. Acc.	
G 15849	Massa's in de cold, cold ground (Foster-Sutton). Unacc.	John Thorne Male Quartette
	Noan ve cry, ma Honey (Noll-Southy). Piano Acc.	

G 15850 Nursery-Land. Part I. Orch. Acc.
Intro. :- There was Old Woman who lived in a Shoe ; The North Wind doth blow ; This Little Piggie went to Market ; Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat.
Nursery-Land. Part II. Orch. Acc.
Intro. :- Old Mother Hubbard ; Old King Cole ; Goosey Goosey Gander ; Little Miss Muffet.

G 15851	To the Spring, Op. 43, No. 6 (Grieg)	Maurice Cole
	L'Aveu, Op. 31, No. 1 (Leschetizky)	(Piano)
G 15820	Träumerei (Schumann-Hofmann)	Piano Acc.	Eileen Andjelkovitch
	The Answer (Wolstenholme-Moizat)	Piano Acc.	(Violin)
G 15852	Columbia. Orch. Acc.	Pietro Capodiferro
	Souvenir of Switzerland (Liberati)	Orch. Acc.	(Cornet)

G 15853	Coriolan Overture (Beethoven), Part I.	} Marlborough Orchestra
	Coriolan Overture (Beethoven), Part II.	
G 15854	The Thin Red Line March (K. Alford)	} Band of H.M. Welsh Guards (Under the direction of Lieut. Andrew Harris)
	The London Scottish March (Haines)	
G 15855	President's March (Victor Herbert)	} U.S.A. Seventh Regiment Band (Under the direction of Lieut. Francis W. Sutherland)
	King Cotton March (Souza)	

G 15856	Virginia—My Padise (Valentine-Tunbridge). Orch. Acc.	} The Original	G. H. Elliott
G 15857	Tennessee—Choo Choo (J. P. Long). Orch. Acc.		Chocolate Coloured Coon
G 15857	Some day we'll meet again (Paul van Loan). Orch. Acc.	}	Dick Henderson
G 15858	Araby (H. Nicholls). Orch. Acc.		Billy Desmond
G 15859	She showed him this—She showed him that (Stone-David). Orch. Acc.	}	Fred Gibson
G 15859	I'm fond of Swistle's Ness Milk (J. P. Long). Orch. Acc.		(Comedian)
G 15760	I've never wronged an Onion (R. Hargreaves). Orch. Acc.	}	Billy Williams
G 15760	Tickle me, Timothy (Billy Williams). Orch. Acc.		(Comedian)
G 15760	The old grey coat (Billy Williams). Orch. Acc.		

G 15860	Oh ! Boy, what a Girl (Wright-Bessinger). Fox Trot with vocal refrain ..	Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra
	Echoes of Ireland (arr. A. Lange). Fox Trot ..	Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra
G 15861	Bah-Bah-Bah-Bartholomew (Melchline-King). Fox Trot with vocal refrain ..	Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra
	Tally Ho ! (Keen-Bidgood). One Step ..	Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra
G 15862	Paddlin' Madelin' Home (Harry Woods). Fox Trot with vocal refrain ..	Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra
	Lovely Lady (Carl Rupp). Waltz.	Harry Bidgood and his Tango Orchestra
	Le Tango du Réve (Maldern). Tango ..	
G 15863	Charleston Baby of Mine (Crossman-Dougherty). ..	Indiana Melodists
	Charleston Fox Trot ..	Boston Dance Orchestra
	Sonár (Dreaming) (Garcia). Waltz.	
G 15864	Oh, Say, Can I see you to-night ? (Creamer-Schuster-Platon). Fox Trot with vocal refrain ..	Ohio Novelty Band
	La Mantilla (Vivian Ellis). Tango ..	Harry Bidgood and his Tango Orchestra
G 15865	Miami (Jolson de Sylva-Conrad). Fox Trot with vocal refrain ..	The Old Virginians

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with the same disagreeable result. On the other hand, the *Bohème* excerpt comes out fairly well and shows off the singer's *sostenuto* to decided advantage.

Lyse Charny.—These are superior examples of Actuelle-Pathé handiwork to those just noticed. They bring out the true timbre of Mme. Charny's voice, which is a rich, strong mezzo-soprano of undeniably French origin. It lends adequate intensity of expression to Charlotte's sad reflections in the duet, *Va! laisse couler mes larmes*, with her sister Sophie (Massenet's *Werther*, Act III), one of the more interesting pages of an opera that I have always found rather tedious. On the reverse side of the disc is the *Seguidilla* from *Carmen*, also sung in French. In this there is more rhythm than animation.

Herbert Teale.—If the singing of big, exacting tenor music comprised nothing more than the employment of a loud, robust tone, then these two records would fulfil every requirement. They represent nothing beyond what any ordinary Yorkshire chorister, with orders to "start *f* and keep it up," could do with the utmost ease. Only the Yorkshire chorister would do something more. He would now and then sing *p*, make a *cres.* or *dim.* and even introduce an occasional *nuance*. This singer does not trouble himself about anything of that sort; he simply keeps his noisiest stop out from beginning to end; and it saves him a lot of trouble. As for his dialect—well, least said soonest mended. But are we really so badly off for decently-trained tenors?

Lotte Lehmann and Heinrich Schlusnus.—Two delightful Mozart duets which, had they come to hand a month earlier would have been gladly welcomed to a place in my first article on the master's operas. We know them best, of course, by their Italian titles as *La ci darem* and *Crudel perchè*; but for the Polydor they are respectively given (in German) as *Reich mir die Hand* and *So lang hab' ich geschmachtet*. This does not really affect their charm, because they are sung here with admirable refinement, grace, and sense of their dramatic significance. The voices blend well, too, and the diction of both singers is irreproachable. For the careful recording praise is due, and the accompaniments, when they are distinguishable, sound excellent.

Amelita Galli-Curci and Tito Schipa.—These duets from *La Traviata* should arouse curiosity. In style they are quite unconventional—nothing like the *Parigi o cara* or the *Un di, felice* of tradition. I should call them studies in staccato; few of the phrases are sustained "so that you could notice it," and the tone of both singers throughout is strangely "white" for such serious personages as are Violetta and Alfredo when meeting and parting in Verdi's opera. The good points are that the voices are always in tune and that, being produced here on the same model, they blend well.

HERMAN KLEIN.

SONGS

PARLOPHONE.—Sistine-Vatican Choir, conducted by Monsignore Casimiri: *Bonum est and Confitebor tibi* (Jo. Petraloyisius Praenestinus (Palestrina), 1525-94); *Puer natus est nobis* (in two parts) (Ferminus Le Bel, 1573); *Estote fortes* (Marenzio, 1550-99), and *Tribulationes civitatum* (Palestrina); *O Rex gloriae* (Marenzio) and *Exultate justi* (Th. Ludovicus a Ciadana, 1564-1648). R.20002-5 (four 12in., 7s. 6d. each).

Emmy Bettendorf (soprano): *Nacht und Träume* (Night and Dreams), Op. 43, No. 2, and *Wiegenlied, Schlafe, Schlafe* (Cradle Song), Op. 98, No. 2 (Schubert). E.10399 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Irmiler Ladies' Choir: *Wiegenlied, Guten abend, gut' Nacht*, Op. 49, No. 4 (Brahms), and *Sterne in Meere* (Reger), E.10400 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

H.M.V.—Leeds Festival Choir: *Mater ora filium* (Bax), in three parts, and *Soul of the World* (Purcell's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day). D.1044-5 (two 12in., 6s. 6d. each).

Elena Gerhardt (mezzo-soprano): *Von ewiger Liebe* (Everlasting Love), Op. 43, No. 1, and *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer*, Op. 105, No. 2 (Brahms). D.B.848 (12in., 8s. 6d.).

Anne Thurstfield (mezzo-soprano): *Four by the clock* (A. Mallinson) and *The Early Morning* and *I will make you brooches* ("The Roadside Fire" from R. L. Stevenson's "Songs of Travel") (Graham Peel). E.404 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Leila Megane (contralto), singing in Welsh: *Pistyll y Llan* (The Village Spring) and *Cymru Anwyl* (Dear Wales) (arr. Osborne Roberts). E.403 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Peter Dawson (bass-baritone): *Wood Magic* (Martin Shaw) and *House of Mine* (D. Stewart); *The Fiddler of Dooney* (Dunhill) and *Molly of Donegal* (H. Austin). B.2154 and 2139 (two 10in., 3s. each).

George Baker (baritone): *Sigh no more, ladies* (Aiken) and *Spanish gold* (Howard Fisher). B.2129 (10in., 3s.).

Beniaminio Gigli (tenor): *Sentinella* and *Sto penzannoa Maria* (E. de Curtis). D.A.730 (10in., 6s.).

Evelyn Scotney (soprano): *The Bird in the Wood* (Jaubert) and *Little Star* (Estrellita) (Ponce). E.406 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Apollo Male Chorus: *Soldier's Chorus* from *Faust* (Gounod). **Goldman's Band:** *On the Campus march* (Goldman). B.2153 (10in., 3s.).

COLUMBIA.—**J. Dale Smith** (baritone): *Since first I saw your face* (Thos. Ford, arr. A. Moffat) and *Helen of Kirkconnell*, (F. Keel). 3833 (10in., 3s.).

The Sheffield Choir, conducted by Dr. Henry Coward, with orchestra: *Worthy is the Lamb* and *Hallelujah Chorus* (Handel's *Messiah*). 9068 (12in., 4s. 6d.).

Arthur Jordan (tenor): *Who is Sylvia?* (Schubert) and *Come not when I am dead* (Holbrooke). 3832 (10in., 3s.).

Kennerley Rumford (baritone): *Sea Fever* (J. Ireland) and *The Holy Child* (Luther's Cradle Hymn—Easthope Martin). D.1532 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Ulysses Lappas (tenor), singing in Greek: *Exomologissis* (Confession) (Samara) and *Kanena* (Nobody) (Lontos). D.1531 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Dame Clara Butt (contralto): *The Willow Song* (Sullivan) and (with orchestra) *Vale* (Farewell) (Kennedy Russell). X.326 (10in., 6s.).

William Heseltine (tenor) with orchestra: *Beneath thy Window* (*O sole mio*) (di Capua) and *Come back* (Toselli's Serenade). 3831 (10in., 3s.).

BELTONE.—**Herbert Thorpe** (tenor): *Who is Sylvia?* (Schubert) and *I'll sing thee songs of Araby* (Clay). 6017 (10in., 3s.).

Herbert Teale (tenor), with orchestra: *Thou shalt break them* (Handel's *Messiah*) and *Total Eclipse* (Handel's *Samson*). 6021 (10in., 3s.).

Winifred Brady (soprano): *The lass with the delicate air* (Arne) and *The brightest day* (Easthope Martin). 6013 (10in., 3s.).

Herbert Thorpe (tenor) and **Harry Brindle** (bass): *Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen* (Thos. Linley, arr. E. Newton) and *A-hunting we will go* (? Arne, arr. E. Newton). 6019 (10in., 3s.).

Harry Brindle (bass), with Orchestra: *Auld Lang Syne* (traditional) and *A Guid New Year* (Hume-Gleadhill). 6020 (10in., 3s.).

Minnie Mearns (contralto) with orchestra: *Softly awakes my heart* (Saint-Saëns' *Samson and Delilah*) and *Abide with me* (Liddle). 5021 (12in., 4s.).

DUOPHONE.—**Stuart Robertson** (bass): *Sea Fever* (John Ireland) and (with Mackenzie-Rogan's Symphony Orchestra) *Pals of yesterday* (A. C. Mackenzie, arr. Mackenzie-Rogan). B.5098 (10in., 2s. 6d.).

BRUNSWICK.—**Elizabeth Rethberg** (soprano), with violin obbligato by **Fredric Fradkin:** *Elegy* (Massenet) and (with orchestra) *Angel's Serenade* (Braga). 10189 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

Elizabeth Lennox (contralto), with orchestra: *Robin Adair* (Keppel) and *Ben Bolt* (Kneass). 2929 (10in., 3s.).

Mario Chamlee (tenor), with orchestra: *My desire* (Cadman) and *Mother! O my mother!* (Ball). 10188 (10in., 4s. 6d.).

H.M.V.—D.1048, 1049, 1050 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—*Selections from Lionel and Clarissa* (Dibdin, arr. Reynolds). First record: *Indeed, forsooth, a pretty youth; Ah, prithee, spare me; How cursedly vexed; and O what a night is here for love* (Finale, Act 2). Second record: *Go, and on my truth relying; To fear a stranger; Ah, talk not to me; and Why with sighs*. Third record: *Come then, peevish, pining lover; Bear, oh bear me; O bliss unexpected; Ladies, pray admire the figure; and In Italy*. Sung by members of the caste, accompanied by the Lyric Theatre (Hammersmith) Orchestra, conducted by Alfred Reynolds.

The issue of four records of sixteenth century church music should be "an event." But, unfortunately, these of the *Sistine-Vatican Choir* are not likely to make history. One cannot recommend mediocre records of even this music, for they are likely to turn people who are unfamiliar with it against it for ever. The actual recording is probably as good as possible. It is the singing

that I object to, and I cannot believe that English conceptions prejudice me, and that this is the right way to treat the music. Those, however, who know and revere such music will find moments in each record; and we need as many records as possible of this class, provided they are adequately good.

Two more of the most heavenly of Schubert's songs from *Emmy Bettendorf* make one pine for more and yet more. She is inclined to scoop a tiny bit; and she cuts a beat in *Nacht und Träume*, but one soon forgives that. Something needs doing about the piano—it is more "banjoey" than ever, and the bass tends frequently to vanish. The *Irmeler Choir* gives us more free arrangements of German songs—beautiful if one is not tired of them.

The *Leeds Festival Choir* records are an historical achievement. Naturally they are far from perfect, seeing that no company yet seems to have discovered how to record perfectly choral music which is as simple as a hymn-tune compared with this appallingly difficult carol. The chief faults are balance and tone, which tends to be very harsh. Even so these two records are of priceless value, both for themselves and for their revelation of present amazing possibilities.

It is daring to criticise *Gerhardt's* singing, but, greatly moving as her record is, doesn't she use rather a lot of vibrato? The emotion of *Von ewige Liebe* may call for this, but that can hardly be said of the other song. Brahms' ungrateful piano writing is shown up badly on this record.

Anne Thursfield's record is the first of hers to be issued. The striking, rich quality of her voice is excellently recorded; also, in some measure, her interpretative powers. The other H.M.V. records are all good reproductions. Vocally and musically, the best are, I think, Peter Dawson's, then Leila Megane's, and George Baker's.

Columbia send a second very fine record of *Dale Smith*, in two more old songs. We are made all the more eager to hear him in other types. These two are very beautiful, though why cannot we have Ford's song as he wrote it? The piano is rather weak. *Dr. Coward* and *The Sheffield Choir* have reputations neither enhanced nor damaged easily. Their wonderful *Messiah* record is not perfect, but gives us reproduction never dreamt of a few years ago—one might almost say a few months ago. The other Columbia records (except those mentioned below) are only moderately good in any respect, with nothing outstanding. The Greek songs one would like to hear more of.

With two more records of the lovely *Who is Sylvia?* four have now been issued in four months. Yet it seems as if we cannot have the ideal, for we still await an English version comparable with that issued last month, sung in German by a woman. Both *Herbert Thorpe's* and *Arthur Jordan's* are, perhaps, good enough to appeal to some individual tastes more than any existing records of the song. Personally I do not think either equal to that reviewed in October. Arthur Jordan's has the advantage of having Holbrooke's imaginative setting of *Come not when I am dead* on the other side.

Beltona are now giving us far greater musical value and maintaining their high standard of recording. One record of theirs has already been mentioned. *Herbert Teale's* Handel record will compare favourably with the best of the half dozen or more Handel oratorio records of the last few months. He does full justice in most ways to the famous *Messiah* aria, and the orchestra is very fine, except for slight faults of intonation and attack at beginning and end. *Total Eclipse* is not quite so good. Of the other Beltonas, *The Lass with the delicate air* and *Here's to the maiden* are the best, though Winifred Brady needs to attend to breath-control and diction. *Softly awakes* is good except, unfortunately, for a bad tremolo. *Auld Lang Syne* and *A Guid New Year* provide the best possible "seasonable" record.

This month there are two records of John Ireland's popular *Sea Fever*; and there seems no doubt at all that the half-crown Duophone record, made by *Stuart Robertson*, is the better. In fact, though one or two criticisms could be made, I ask for no better record of the song in any way, vocally, in interpretation or in reproduction. The reverse side, *Pals of yesterday*, is better than the title suggests.

Tonally, *Elizabeth Rethberg's* record of Massenet's *Elegy*, with her voice and a very fine obbligato violin, is gorgeous, and almost equally so in interpretation. I defy anyone not perfectly familiar with the French and English words to decide what language she is singing in, but yet one cannot help feeling enthusiastic. There are pleasing qualities in *Elizabeth Lennox's* record of *Robin Adair*, despite lack of clear diction and frequent scooping. *Mario Chamlee* uses one of the most powerful tenor voices with all conceivable energy.

C. M. C.

The Dibdin ballad opera has caught on in the home of the original and best of the tribe—*The Beggar's Opera*—Dibdin was quite a young man when he wrote this. He selected his tunes with care, but his own bits are not of much account; he was not much of a musician, and he lived at a time—the end of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth—when the influence of Purcell had departed, and only the foreigner ruled us in English music. It was in many respects a beneficent rule; but it was only natural that Handel, Haydn, and Mozart should be imitated by every youngster, much as to-day the young lions give us a lot of second-hand Holst, Williams, and Stravinsky. It is interesting to pick out from the plum-porridge of this opera the best tunes (several of which are from contemporary "classics") and to compare the poorer ones with those of similar mood (but almost always superior in quality) in *The Beggar's Opera*. The man who selected the music for *The Beggar* was trained. Dibdin wasn't. The training was much more a training in taste—in discrimination—than in technique. That, indeed, is the vital necessity always.

The singers are better than most singers who have to act. Their words are not as clear as they might be, always. They ought to listen to Mr. Ranaow or to the records of the late Pitt Chatham. The words do matter, even in a ballad-opera with so feeble a plot as this. Steadier tone would have given us greater pleasure, too.

Though there is not the width and felicity of choice in the music that made *The Beggar* such a charming work, we have quite good measure of pleasing tunes, and a few really expressive ones, in this opera. The little orchestra is rather short of strings, especially of bass, but it accompanies clearly and well. The string tone is, in the new recording, inferior to that of the wind instruments. This weakness comes out prominently when we hear them in solo bits.

K. K.

BAND RECORDS

ACO.

G.15831 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: (a) *Eternal Father*, (b) *Lead kindly light*, and (a) *O God our help*, (b) *Abide with me*.

G.15832 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Pantomime Hits*, Parts 1 and 2.

ACTUELLE.

15207-8 (size 12, 7s.).—Garde Républicaine Band: *Ballet Egyptien*. Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 (Luigini).

BELTONA AND BELTONA-DE-LUXE.

874 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Beltona Military Band: *Pantomime Hits*, Parts 1 and 2.

875 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Beltona Military Band: *Royal Standard March* (Stanton) and *The Thin Red Line March* (Alford).

876 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Beltona Military Band: (a) *Eternal Father*, (b) *Lead kindly light*, and (a) *O God our help*, (b) *Abide with me*.

6007 (10in., 3s.).—Clydebank Burgh Brass Band: *The B.B. and C.F. March* (J. Ord Hume) and *The Piper's Wedding* (K. Thayne).

6008 (10in., 3s.).—Clydebank Burgh Brass Band: *Punchinello* (Rimmer) and *Sons o' the Sea* (Rimmer).

6009 (10in., 3s.).—Clydebank Burgh Brass Band: *Land of Hope and Glory* (Elgar), euphonium soloist, Mr. H. T. Barthwick, and *Il Bacio* (Arditi), cornet soloist, Mr. G. L. Macdonald.

6010 (10in., 3s.).—Clydebank Burgh Brass Band: *Tam o' Shanter*, Parts 1 and 2 (arr. Round).

DUOPHONE.

A.1024 (12in., 4s.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *The Shoe Ballet Music*, Parts 1 and 2 (J. Ansell).

A.1025 (12in., 4s.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Le Nozze de Figaro Overture* (Mozart) and *Oberon Overture* (Weber).

A.1026 (12in., 4s.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Christmas Church Parade*, Parts 1 and 2 (arr. Mackenzie-Rogan).

B.5096 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Two Little Dances: Part 1, La Minuet, and Part 2, La Gavotte* (H. Finck).

B.5097 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Mackenzie-Rogan's Military Band: *Martial Moments* (Winter) and *The Parade of the Tin Soldiers* (L. Jessel).

H.M.V.

C.122617 (12in., 9s.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards, assisted by the drummers of the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, the pipers of the 1st Battalion Scots Guards, and Chorus

(directed by Lieut. R. G. Evans): **Wembley Military Tattoo, Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4.**

PARLOPHONE.

5500 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Parlophone Military Band: **Steadfast and True March** and the Parlophone Laughing Record, No. 2 (The Singing Lesson).

VOCALION.

K.05204 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: **Veronique Selection, Parts 1 and 2** (Messenger).

X.9667 (10in., 3s.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: **Mirella Overture, Parts 1 and 2** (Gounod).

ZONOPHONE.

2636 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Black Diamonds Band: **Savoy Christmas Medley** (one-step and fox-trot) (arr. Delroy Somers).

2654 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Black Diamonds Band: **Songs of the North, Parts 1 and 2** (arr. David George).

2655 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Black Diamonds Band: **All Scotch Selection, Parts 1 and 2** (McKenna).

The four hymn tunes do not make a very successful record. The tone throughout is rather dull and the drum roll introducing the second verse of *Abide with me* is badly recorded. The playing is moderate, except for a certain breathlessness in *Eternal Father*. To select the "hits" from pantomimes several weeks before they are produced must be a task requiring a certain amount of cheery optimism! This selection contains such popular favourites as the *Toy Drum Major*, *Bouquet*, *Oh! how I love my darling*, and *Shanghai*; and it is a very pleasant change to hear such pieces played by a military band. The *Toy Drum Major* is not played as crisply as it might be and the intonation is faulty in places, but apart from this the record is first rate and is sure to be popular at this season.

Subtle nuances of expression and accent in the latest records of Luigini's *Egyptien Ballet Suite* make it a real pleasure to listen again to this rather hackneyed music. The playing of the Garde Républicaine Band is magnificent and in the first three movements the recording is good. Actuelle records contrive to reproduce the characteristic tone of the oboe better than those of any company I know, and this instrument has, of course, a very prominent part in the suite. In the fourth movement the bells are not managed very well, being both too loud and a trifle strident in tone. In spite of this I am pleased to add this record to my collection; it would be worth it if only for the beautiful playing and recording of the piccolos in the third movement on the reverse.

The notes on the ACO records of the four hymns and of *Pantomime Hits* apply equally to those issued by the BELTONE Company. *Royal Standard* and *The Thin Red Line* marches are bright and tuneful and played with precision by a band possessing a nice mezzo tone. In the former the trombone playing is very clean, and in the latter there is some very nice piccolo work which is not too prominent as is frequently the case.

The Clydebank Burgh Band, with its record of having won the Scottish championship fourteen times since the foundation of the band in 1891, is sure of a warm welcome to the gramophone world from both sides of the border. The band has rather a heavy tone and in consequence is not easy to record successfully. On the whole, the first four issues are good except in the percussion department, which always seems to present difficulties until some experience has been gained. At the same time both the band and the recording company would do well to realise that from such a full-toned band a little volume could quite well be spared in order to get cleaner definition. The titles chosen are not particularly enterprising, and of the four records I prefer *Tam o' Shanter*, which is cleverly played and which contains some beautiful soprano work in the introduction. *Punchinello* and *Sons o' the Sea* are rather dull and in the former there are one or two lapses in intonation. *B.B. and C.F.* is played neatly and with strongly marked sforzandos, while *The Piper's Wedding* receives treatment that deserves bestowing on better music. The two soloists acquit themselves admirably. Ardit's waltz song, which makes a good cornet solo, is very tastefully played, as is *Land of Hope and Glory* except for one slip, but I do not like the instrumentation in the *tutti* at the end of the latter.

This month's batch of Duophone records is very enterprising. Ansell's picturesque suite, *The Shoe*, is extremely well done, the clarinets, oboe, and flute being particularly good in the *Ballet Shoe* as are the basses and bassoon in *The Brogue*. Mozart's music has always been considered unsuited to military bands, but *The Marriage of Figaro Overture* is tackled so well that one almost forgets this. The violin parts are so effectively played by the

clarinets that but for a slight refinement of light and shade, which is comparatively easy on strings but next to impossible on reeds, being lacking the illusion is almost complete. *Oberon* only suffers by comparison, though the form of the overture is disfigured by cuts and the balance is not good in the final chords. The *Christmas Church Parade* is better than most of its ilk and is seasonable. The muted cornets in *The Parade of the Tin Soldiers* are delightful and the side drum is very crisp, while the euphonium obligato towards the end is better played and recorded than in any record of this that I have heard. *Martial Moments* is a much cut version, but cuts do not matter in this sort of thing. Finck's two dances make a very attractive record equally good on both sides, the playing being as delicate as could be desired and the balance just about perfect. The fact that timpani are used in some of these records adds considerably to the colour and in suitable music these instruments are much preferable to the usual side drum. A particular word of praise is due for the recording of the brass basses, which is so good that one is tempted to apply the new H.M.V. slogan, "Listen for the bass," to all these records, and particularly to the two dances by Herman Finck. The recording of the cymbals is still rather feeble, but this defect will doubtless be remedied before long.

The *Wembley Tattoo* record is amazing and will conjure up vivid memories to those who witnessed this spectacle. The balance between band and chorus is really splendid, while the bagpipes are so realistic that my cat, who has long been inured to the mysteries of gramophones, still utters loud and discordant protests whenever the record is played. To get the best result a loud needle must be used and the only real flaw in the whole set is that this makes one or two of the notes played by the fifes piercingly loud. Perhaps the finest feature of all is the success with which the atmosphere is "got over."

Steadfast and True is a well-known march played briskly, with fine precision, and well recorded. The weakness of the laughing record on the reverse side is that the singing lesson is not funny enough to raise even a smile. It is, however, almost as difficult to refrain from laughing with the lady as to laugh at the man.

Veronique contains a lot of melodious and cheerful music, but in this selection more might have been made of the Finale of Act III. This is not given the lift it should have, with the result that the record ends rather tamely. By the way, the first bar or two of *Dear little donkey*—the first air on the second side—contain the germ of the famous (or notorious?) *I want to be happy* out of *No, No, Nanette*. The *Overture to Mirella* is excellent, the playing of the Life Guards Band being much more virile and sparkling than that of the Garde Républicaine Band in the record issued by the Pathé Company last month. The music is well suited to a military band and the arrangement of the score is admirable.

All the new issues by the Black Diamonds Band are good. The two *Savoy Medleys* and the *All Scotch One-step* are composed of old songs played in quite the wrong time in order to get the correct rhythm for dancing. Whether or not they make good dance records is more a matter for Richard Herbert than for me, but of the two I prefer the latter. *Songs of the North* is a pot pourri of Scotch songs and is very well arranged. The recording is good in all three and particularly so in *All Scotch*.

W. A. C.

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS.

There is one enchanting record among the thirty or forty in my heap, one record which I can thoroughly recommend. It comes from America and is sung by **Jack Smith** on H.M.V., B.2192 (3s.), and the songs which he sings are *I'm knee-deep in daisies* and *Feelin' kind o' blue*. Recording marvellous, singing and expression almost impeccable (I except a terrible vowel in the second verse of the former song), and such mastery of the art which gives life to common tunes and words that I am shaken in my admiration for Nick Lucas and even for Melville Gideon. **Nick Lucas**, however, is very good on Brunswick 2906 (3s.) with *Isn't she the sweetest thing?* and *By the light of the Stars*, thrumming his guitar and singing lightly; and I can again recommend a Hawaiian record by **Palaliko and Paaluhi** on Brunswick 2926 (3s.), but not quite so heartily as last month. Of the January H.M.V.'s I have only **Miss Betty Chester's** record of two Melville Gideon songs, *Prairie Love* and *The land you've never heard of* (B.2191, 3s.), which hardly do justice to the attraction of this popular Co-optimist. But besides Jack Smith, the mid-December list included some *Mercenary Mary* records in which **Miss Kathleen Hilliard** and **Mr. George Baker** take the various parts. Needless to say, they

are more used to the recording room than the original artists—who recorded exclusively for Columbia last month—but they are no more than adequate, and the clear enunciation of Miss Hilliard (now and then a trifle too arch) is counter balanced by the wordlessness of Mr. Baker's singing. These records are B.1228 (4s. 6d.), B.2194 (3s.), and B.2195 (3s.), and the last is the best. Columbia follows up the extremely good selection (9062, 4s. 6d.) of last month with a twelve-inch record of *Vocal Gems* from *Mercenary Mary*, a very striking piece of recording, but inevitably the tunes are taken at a great pace, and the effect is not wholly good (Col. 9067, 4s. 6d.). There is an orchestral selection on *Actuelle* 10960 (2s. 6d.), which is good enough if you hesitate to spend 4s. 6d. on the Columbia one. Similarly, if you want the *Rose Marie Selection*, the Duophone (A.1022, 4s.) twelve-inch record is good value, played by *Mackenzie-Rogan's Symphony Orchestra*.

MILTON HAYES records Nos. 12 and 13 of the *Meanderings of Monty* on Col. 3834 (3s.), discussing the Empire spirit and the sad story of Mrs. Paddlewick. The latter is capable of slightly shocking a mixed audience; but both are full of the usual rich tangle of bons mots, and the evening paper still fails to record its rustling with conviction. Two other Columbia records that will interest the students of recording are 3814 and 3815 (3s. each) containing such things as *Sacred Night*, *Holy Night* and *O faithful Pine*, *O Sanctissima* and *Adeste Fideles*, played by the incredibly so-called *Christmas Chimes of the Homeland*.

I wonder still more this month whether **Bruce Wallace** is not meant for better work than singing *By the light of the stars* and *On a night like this* (Parlo. 5509, 2s. 6d.). He has an almost effortless tenor voice and some really beautiful notes. Among other Parlophones is a twelve-inch *Merry Widow Selection*, played in the Viennese manner by **Edith Lorand's Orchestra**, and rather interesting on that account, though of course very well played otherwise. I cannot understand the popularity of **Richard Gilbert** (Parlo. E.5514, 2s. 6d.) in America, though it may be because I prefer the eternal blueness of our cousins when they are in love as interpreted by Jack Smith. Remember him, H.M.V., B.2192.

PEPPERING.

NEW-POOR RECORDS

ACO.—Elsie Francis-Fisher will be welcomed again this month with the CONTRALTO song, *Sleepy Hollow Tune*. John Thorne's BARITONE voice is as admirable as ever in *By the Waters of Babylon*. Marie Dare plays W. H. Squire's *Harlequinade* on her 'cello. Peggy Cochrane's VIOLIN SOLO is *La Précieuse*. But the best record of the group, to my mind, and well out of the beaten track, is the ORCHESTRAL number, *Dagger Dance*, from *Natoma* (Herbert), played by the Grosvenor Orchestra with a wonderful drum in it.

BELTONE.—An exceptionally good 10in. BARITONE record is the pair *St. Nicholas at Wade* and *Sincerity*, sung by Fred Sutcliffe; the vocal work is exactly what it should be and the recording is as good of the piano as of the voice. There is a popular BARITONE number from *Mercenary Mary*, *I am thinking of you* (2s. 6d.). A good MILITARY BAND MARCH is *Royal Standard* (2s. 6d.), an unusually characteristic FOX-TROT is *Araby* (2s. 6d.). The favourite *Tango du Rêve* is recorded in strict modern tango time (2s. 6d.). The best CONTRALTO record I have of *Abide with me* (Liddle) is sung by Minnie Mearns (4s.).

HOMOCHORD.—Another of Stanley Holt's perfect pianoforte FOX-TROTS is *Charleston* (2s. 6d.). Those who have the *Danish Serenade*, sung by Kass, will wish to hear his ITALIAN OPERA number, *Cortigiani* from *Rigoletto* (4s.).

IMPERIAL.—Among these excellent two-shilling numbers there is the best record I have of *Adelai*, sung by Robert Kinnear, who also sings *Babette* admirably. An OPERATIC number for the banjo is a rarity—*Sextet from Lucia* (Donizetti).

PARLOPHONE.—It is great good luck to get two Vincent Lopez discs (2s. 6d. each) in one month, *Silverhead* and *Lonesome*. There are no half-crown ORCHESTRAL waltzes as good as Edith Lorand's, *Sometime* and *Gold and Silver* (2s. 6d.).

REGAL.—A valuable new departure is a record for violin, organ, and piano—*Spring's Awakening* (2s. 6d.).

VELVET FACE.—It must be remembered that the whole of this fine list is now available at new-poor prices. It is difficult to find a really good ORCHESTRAL of *Tannhäuser*, but here there is one for 4s. Twelve-inch WALTZES are most useful for dancing to; *Rosenkavalier*, played by Casano's Octette (not jazz), is a case in point. The Palladium OCTETTE numbers on this list are worth attention by those who like pretty light music, *Chanson Melodie*.

WINNER.—The only vigorous half-crown TANGO by a correctly constituted band I yet have is *Por Ti*.

ULTIMATE SELECTION.—ORCHESTRAL: 12in., *Tannhäuser* (V.F.); 10in., *Dagger Dance* (ACO.). INSTRUMENTAL TRIO: *Spring's Awakening* (REGAL). OCTETTE: *Chanson Melodie* (V.F.). SACRED SONG: *Abide with me* (BELTONE). PIANOFORTE: *Charleston* (HOMO.). BARITONE: 12in., *Cortigiani* (HOMO.); 10in., *St. Nicholas-at-Wade* (BELTONE).

“LAUGHING RECORD No. 2.”—Of all the essentially amusing records specially designed for the season of home entertainment I have heard nothing to equal the above-named production of the Parlophone Company. A student of singing with a pleasant light baritone voice and a cold attempts his sol-fa with a lady at the piano. The effect of the cold upon the voice leads to some perfectly acted fun that must put every hearer in a good temper.

H. T. B.

NOTE.—Vocalion records for January arrived too late for review. The *Old King Cole Suite* of last month is now followed by *The Wasp's Overture* of Vaughan-Williams, similarly played by the Aeolian Orchestra and conducted by the composer (A.0249, 5s. 6d.). But perhaps the most interesting record in a good all-round bulletin is a scene from *Falstaff* (Verdi), in which Roy Henderson sings no less than three parts, those of Falstaff, of Ford, and of Ford masquerading as “Master Brook” (K.05205 and 05206, 9s.). Whether this *tour de force* will please the reviewers must be left for our next issue to prove. Among other Vocalions this month are Luella Paikin in Mozart and the Waltz Song from *Roméo et Juliette*; Armand Tokatyan, Malcolm McEachern, Horace Stevens, Kathleen Destournel, Enid Cruikshank, and John Mathewson; while Lionel Tertis, Phyllis Allan, and Howard Bliss are also represented.

BOOK REVIEW.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE PLAYER-PIANIST.

By Sydney Grew (London: “Musical Opinion,” 5s. net).

To any but the incurably “passive” gramophonist this book must provide a powerful stimulus to the investigation of the claims of the player-piano. He will learn that by means of this instrument he is enabled to achieve the joy of actually re-creating music *via* his own personality, thereby attaining a satisfaction not to be reached in merely listening to the production of music, by however great an artist. And if he displays some musical intelligence, and some diligence, he should very soon reach a high standard of artistic merit, and, while hearing a real piano, and not—I say this with bated breath—an echo of one, no matter how beautiful or faithful it may be.

Moreover, much of the book provides a manual of musical appreciation which will have a wider appeal. The chapters on theory, time and its various aspects, beats and phrases, should make many rough places plain, besides helping the most passive listener to listen better—either to his gramophone or wireless set.

The first portion contains a short explanation of the instrument and its controls, with general instructions on performance. In this matter, however, and indeed throughout the book, the author attaches too little regard to the sustaining pedal—or rather fails to stress its importance as one of the three vital controls of the player-piano. The technique of pedalling, and the subject of time and tempo are adequately dealt with, principally in relation to the very large number of pieces which are listed for study. (This feature alone will be worth the price of the book to many.) But the beginner may achieve the final mastery of his instrument in these matters and yet fail if he is without a proper appreciation and knowledge of the use of the sustaining pedal.

In general, however, the book may be confidently recommended to the person who is unprejudiced enough to wish to widen his musical horizon by means of the player-piano. But one must recognise a certain reciprocity—no one can use such an instrument artistically without a certain embryonic musical instinct, and this may be enormously cultivated—along a road of increasing delight—with the help of the player-piano.

STRETTO.

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December Supplement.

Vocals

- 1529 { Adelai (Joseph Spurin).
Sung by Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.
Panama (R. Katscher).
Sung by Chas. Bonheur, with Orchestral Accomp.
Babette (H. Nicholls).
Sung by Guy Victor, with Orchestral Accomp.
1528 { Paddlin' Madellin' Home (Harry Woods).
Sung by Lionel Rothery, with Orchestral Accomp.
You Forgot to Remember (created by Miss José Collins) (Irving Berlin).
Sung by Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.
1527 { I'm a Little Bit Fonder of You (from "Mercenary Mary") (Irving Caesar). Duet.
Sung by Miss Cecilia Howe and Robert Kinnear, with Orchestral Accomp.
I'm an Airman (McGhee and Russell). Comedy Song.
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.
1526 { She Showed Him This—She Showed Him That (Stone and David) Comedy Song.
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.

Christmas Descriptive Record

- 1525 { An Old Time Xmas Party (Charles Penrose). Descriptive.
By Charles Penrose & Co.
Xmas at Sea (Charles Penrose). Descriptive.
By Charles Penrose & Co.

Eddie Peabody's Banjo Records

- 1524 { Sextette from "Lucia" (Donizetti).
Poet and Peasant Overture (Suppé).

Dances

- 1523 { I Miss My Swiss (My Swiss Miss Misses Me) (Wolfe, Gilbert and Baer). Fox Trot. Played by Golden Gate Orchestra.
Sonya (Fisher and Schafer). Fox Trot.
Played by Lou. Gold's Orchestra.

Dances—continued

- 1522 { Paddlin' Madellin' Home (Harry Woods). Fox Trot.
Played by Newport Society Orchestra.
On the Sunny Side of Life (H. Klages). Fox Trot.
Played by Imperial Dance Orchestra.
1521 { My Sweetie Turned Me Down (Kahn and Donaldson). Fox Trot.
Played by Six Black Diamonds.
Are You Sorry? (Davis and Ager). Fox Trot.
Played by Bar Harbor Orchestra.

Christmas Carols, and Hymns

- 1362 { Adeste Fideles. Christmas Hymn. Sung by the Vesper Trio.
The Bell Ringer (Whitlock). Bells.
Played by Billy Whitlock and "Garge."
1006 { O, Come All Ye Faithful. Imperial Quartette.
Good King Wenceslas. Imperial Quartette.
1067 { The First Noel. Imperial Quartette.
Hark, the Herald Angels Sing. Imperial Quartette.
1068 { Star of Bethlehem. Mr. David Bell.
Holy City. Mr. Ernest Manser.
1069 { Nazareth. Mr. F. T. Kinniburgh.
Land of Hope and Glory. Mr. F. T. Kinniburgh.
976 { While Shepherds Watched; O Come All Ye Faithful; The Manger Throne; God Rest You, Merry Gentlemen. Sung by a Cathedral Quartette of St. Paul's Cathedral.
977 { Lead Kindly Light; The First Noel; Good Christian Men; We Three Kings of Orient. Sung by a Cathedral Quartette of St. Paul's Cathedral.
978 { Abide With Me; Jesu, Lover of My Soul; All People that on Earth do Dwell. Sung by a Cathedral Quartette of St. Paul's Cathedral.
979 { Nearer My God to Thee; Fight the Good Fight. Sung by a Cathedral Quartette of St. Paul's Cathedral.

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DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

In the list which follows the titles of all the best records are printed in heavy type (Clarendon), the first six only in the list of each dance being in order of merit. The use of asterisks is a further effort to denote comparative merit.

When one band only is mentioned in describing a record it means that both tunes are played by the same band. (V.) after the name of a tune indicates the presence of a vocal refrain, chorus, or accompaniment. All records are 10in. unless otherwise described. The abbreviations of makers' names are obvious.

WALTZES.

- PARLO. E.10398 (12in.).—**Wedding of the Winds, Parts 1 and 2** (Edith Lorand Orchestra). The Edith Lorand Orchestra shows even greater artistry than Marek Weber, but, perhaps, has not the same individuality.
- PARLO. E.10395 (12in.).—**Liebeslieder and Donanweibchen** (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra). Both sheer undiluted joy.
- COL. 9066 (12in.).—**Lagunen and Voices of Spring** (Geiger Viennese Dance Orchestra). A first-rate band, moreover music worth listening to.
- PARLO. E.5508.—**Gold and Silver and Over the Waves** (Edith Lorand Orchestra). A half-crown record which every waltz-lover should buy.
- PARLO. E.10396 (12in.).—**Venetian Nights** (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra) and see "One-steps." Quiet, restrained, and really lovely.
- COL. 3820.—***Pearl of Hawaii and *Sometime** (Xylo-Rimba Orchestra). A good record for those who like the xylophone and similar instruments.
- ACT. 10956.—***Poem and *Creep into my arms** (Broadway Waltz Orchestra).
- COL. 3819.—***Close your eyes** (Denza Dance Band) and see "Fox-trots."
- COL. 3823.—***Love's dream and *I love the moon** (V.) (New Princes Toronto Band).
- H.M.V. B.2197.—****Wondering** (Kit-Cat Band) and see "Fox-trots."
- PARLO. E.5503.—****Babette** (Marlborough Dance Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots." Quite a good record of a most popular tune.
- PARLO. E.5504.—***You forgot to remember** (Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."
- PARLO. E.5507.—****Sometime** (Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra) and see "Fox-trots."

FOX-TROTS.

- H.M.V. B.2183.—**The Co-ed and Dinah** (Savoy Orpheans). A very good record which depends chiefly on its fine playing and orchestration and not on its not very original tunes.
- BRUN. 2936.—**Yes, Sir, That's my baby and If I had a girl like you** (Bennie Krueger's Orchestra). Both are played with fine rhythm for dancing—the second has lovely bass notes.
- COL. 3822.—**Dog on the Piano and Araby** (Percival Mackey's Band). Percival Mackey displays his incomparable skill at the piano.
- PARLO. E.5504.—**Kinky Kids Parade** (Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra) and see "Waltzes." An amusing tune, but rather choppy. Good, but not one of Vincent Lopez's best.
- H.M.V. B.2185.—**Hearts and Flowers and **Peaceful Valley** (Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra). Quiet and restrained for Paul Whiteman.

- IMP. 1521.—****Are you sorry? (V.)** (Bar Harbour Orchestra) and ****My sweetie turned me down (V.)** (Six Black Diamonds). The first has mellow tones, but is rather spoilt by the vocal part.
- ACT. 10959.—***Over my shoulder (V.) and *I miss my Swiss (V.)** (Star Syncopaters). The first is from *Mercenary Mary*.
- ACT. 10962.—***Save your sorrow for to-morrow (V.) and **Row, Row, Rosie (V.)** (Mike Speciale's Dance Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2908.—**Blues in F and Wigwam Blue** (Mound City Blue Blowers). **Blues.** Why does the blues monopolise these extraordinary noises?
- BRUN. 2913.—***Collegiate (V.)** (Carl Fenton's Orchestra) and ***Sweet Georgia Brown** (Isham Jones Orchestra). **One-Step** time (the first), the second a **Charleston Fox-trot**.
- BRUN. 2915.—****Let me linger longer in your arms and Ida, I do** (Isham Jones Orchestra). The second has an intriguing trotting rhythm.
- BRUN. 2916.—***Ev'rything is hotsy totsy now (V.) and *He's just a horn-tootin' fool** (Herb Wiedoeft's Cinderella Roof Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2925.—***Alone at last (V.) and **Say Arabella (V.)** (Carl Fenton's Orchestra).
- BRUN. 2933.—***I'm tired of everything but you and **You got 'em** (Isham Jones Orchestra). Played with verve.
- COL. 3817.—**Speech (V.) and *Sweet man** (Denza Dance Band). This *Sweet man* is better than the H.M.V.
- COL. 3818.—***Let's wander away (V.) and **Dreaming of to-morrow** (Denza Dance Band).
- COL. 3819.—***Want a little lovin' (V.)** (Denza Dance Band) and see "Waltzes."
- COL. 3821.—****Naila, Intermezzo and *Echoes of Ireland** (Percival Mackey's Band).
- COL. 3824.—***Paddlin' Madelin' home (V.) and *The Hylton Medley** (New Princes Toronto Band).
- H.M.V. B.2184.—***Freshie (V.) and *Want a little lovin' (V.)** (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra). The second is better than the Columbia record of the same tune.
- H.M.V. B.2186.—***Bam bam bammy shore (V.) and *Speech!** (V.) (Savoy Havana Band). *Speech!* is better than Col. 3817.
- H.M.V. B.2188.—****Lillian and *The baby looks like me** (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).
- H.M.V. B.2189.—***Sweet man and **One smile (V.)** (Jack Hylton and his Orchestra). The vocal part is better sung than most.
- H.M.V. B.2197.—***If you hadn't gone away (V.)** (Kit-Cat Band) and see "Waltzes." There is a kind of double rhythm to this tune.
- IMP. 1522.—***On the sunny side of life** (Imperial Dance Orchestra) and ***Paddlin' Madelin' home** (Newport Society Orchestra).
- IMP. 1523.—***I miss my Swiss** (Golden Gate Orchestra) and ***Sonya (V.)** (Lou Gold's Orchestra).
- PARLO. E.5484.—***My sweetie turned me down and *Pango Pango Maid** (the Red Hotters).
- PARLO. E.5503.—****Sunny Havana** (Marlborough Dance Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."
- PARLO. E.5505.—***Brown eyes, why are you blue and *I'm knee-deep in daisies** (Melody Sheiks).
- PARLO. E.5506.—***Rose of the Nile and *Collegiate (V.)** (Carolina Club Orchestra). The second is played in **one-step** time.
- PARLO. E.5507.—****Lonesome** (Vincent Lopez and his Hotel Pennsylvania Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."

TANGOS.

- BRUN. 2393.—****A tango in the night and *From five 'till seven** (Joseph C. Smith Trio). Fine for such a small band.

ONE-STEP.

- PARLO. E.10396 (12in.).—***Fleur d'Amour** (Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra) and see "Waltzes."

The prices of the records in the list are as follows:—Actuelle: 10in., 2s. 6d. Brunswick: 10in., 3s. Columbia: 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 3s. H.M.V.: 10in., 3s. Imperial: 10in., 2s. Parlophone: 12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d.

TRANSLATIONS

(Contributed by H. F. V. LITTLE)

AH! NON AVEA PIÙ LAGRIME

(Maria di Rudenz—Donizetti.)

Battistini, H.M.V., D.B.150, 12in., d.s., red.

Egli ancora non giunge e tu m'attendi, adorata Matilda,
Still he comes not and you await me, dearest Matilda, like a
 spirito sceso dei cieli a consolarmi! L'ira placar del mio
spirit sent from Heaven above to cheer me! God has chosen
 destin perverso a te concesse Iddio!
you to soften the bitterness of my malign fate.

Ah! non avea più lagrime il ciglio inaridito,
Ah! My eyes had exhausted their tears in weeping,

Mancò la speme all'anima, la pace al cor,
My soul had lost all hope, my wounded heart its peace.

La pace al cor, al cor ferito.

Il ciel di fosco ammanto per me si circondò. Ah!
Dark and gloomy was the sky above me. Ah!

Valle d'amaro pianto la terra a me sembrò, sembrò,
Earth seemed to me a bitter vale of sorrow.

Valle d'amaro pianto, d'amaro pianto, ah,

La terra a me sembrò, a me sembrò.

Ti vidi, o cara, e in estasi d'amor, d'amor che l'alma invase,
Then I saw you, dear, and in the ecstasy of love, of love that
filled my soul,

"M'ami?" ti dissi, e tacito il labbro tuo, il labbro tuo rimase;
I asked "Do you love me?" and your lips, your lips were silent;

Ma il guardo lusinghiero mi favellò d'amor, ah, sì,
But your tender glances spoke to me of love, ah, yes,

E l'universo intero mi parve un riso allor, allor;
And then, then, the whole world seemed to smile upon me.

Ah, l'universo intero, l'universo intero, ah,

Mi parve un riso, un riso allor;

L'universo, l'universo intero parve un riso allor,

Mi parve un riso allora, mai parve un riso allor.

MARTERN ALLER ARTEN

(Che pur aspro al cuore)

(Die Entführung aus dem Serail—Mozart.)

Arkandj, Polydor 65732, 12in., d.s., black.

Hempel, H.M.V., D.B.331, 12in., d.s., red.

Ivogün, Polydor 85303, 12in., d.s., grey.

Jungbauer, Polydor 65741, 12in., d.s., black.

Meyen, Polydor 65747, 12in., d.s., black.

Schadow, Polydor 19032, 12in., d.s., green.

Martern :| aller Arten|: mögen meiner warten,
All kinds of tortures may await me,

:| Ich verlache |: Qual und Pein!
But I laugh at sorrow and torment!

::| Nichts |: soll mich erschüttern;
Nothing shall shake me;

:| Nur dann |: würd' ich zittern
Only then would I tremble,

Wenn ich :| untreu |: jemals könnte sein!
If I should ever be untrue!

:| Nur dann |: würd' ich zittern
 Wenn ich untreu :| könnte sein! :

Lass dich bewegen! Verschone mich!
Be moved to pity! Spare me!

:| Des Himmels Segen belohne dich! :|
May Heaven's blessing reward you!

:| Des Himmels Segen |: belohne dich!
 Des Himmels Segen :| belohne |: dich!

Des Himmels Segen belohne dich,

Belohne dich, :| belohne |: dich!

Lass dich bewegen! Verschone mich!

Des Himmels Segen :| belohne dich! :|

:| Doch du bist entschlossen! :|

So you are determined!

Willig, unverdrossen.

Then freely, cheerfully,

Wähl' ich jede Pein und Not,

I choose torment and suffering.

Wähl' ich :| jede Pein |: und Not.

:| Ordne nur, gebiete, |:

Rule and command me if you like,

Lärme, tobe, wüte,

Shout, rage, and storm,

:| Zuletzt befreit mich doch der Tod, |: der Tod,

But at last death will set me free!

:| Zuletzt befreit mich doch der Tod, |: der Tod!

DURCH ZÄRTLICHKEIT UND SCHMEICHELN

(Die Entführung aus dem Serail—Mozart.)

E. Schumann, Polydor 65580, 12in., d.s., black.

Durch Zärtlichkeit und Schmeicheln,

By tenderness and flattery,

Gefälligkeit und Scherzen,

Obligingness and jollity,

Erobert man die Herzen

One captures the hearts

:| Der guten Mädchen leicht. |:

Of nice girls easily.

Doch mürrisches Befehlen,

But surly commanding,

:| Und Poltern, Zanken, Plagen, |:

And shouting, vexing, quarrelling,

:| Macht dass in wenig Tagen

Cause, in a few days,

So Lieb' als Treu entweicht, |:

Love and faithfulness to vanish.

So Lieb' als Treu entweicht.

Durch Zärtlichkeit . . . etc.

WELCHE WONNE, WELCHE LUST

(Die Entführung aus dem Serail—Mozart.)

E. Schumann, Polydor 65580, 12in., d.s., black.

:| Welche Wonne, welche Lust

What rapture, what joy

Herrscht nunmehr in meiner Brust! |:

Now reigns in my breast!

Ohne Aufschub will ich springen

Without delay I'll hasten

Und ihr gleich die Nachricht bringen

Straightway to her with the news

Und mit Lachen und mit Scherzen

And, with laughing and joking,

Ihrem schwachen, feigen Herzen

To her faint, timid heart

:| Freud' und Jubel prophezei'n. |:

Foretell happiness and rejoicing.

The remainder is repetition.

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PROMESSE DE MON AVENIR (O casto fior del mio sospir)

(Le Roi de Lahore (Il Re di Lahore)—Massenet.)

Battistini, H.M.V., D.B., 150, 12in., d.s., red.
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Aux troupes du sultan qui menaçaient Lahore, la royal cité,
Le barbare tribù, che stavan quasi a campo nanzi l'alma
Against the Sultan's troops that were threatening the royal city,

notre puissance est redoutable encore ! comme si les chassait
Lahor', indietreggiar dei nostri acciari al lampo ! Quasi invi-
Lahore, our might is still formidable. As if some invisible

quelque invisible main, elles ont du désert regagné le chemin.
sibil man premesse i fianchi lor, del deserto fatal rivarcarco il
hand were pursuing them, they have fallen back to the desert road.

Le peuple est rassuré ; c'est mon nom qu'il acclame ! Le
confin. La calma rinascea ; acclamato è il mio nome ! Un
The people are reassured ; mine is the name they acclaim !

calme est rentré dans mon âme et je puis être heureux enfin !
nuovo lauro cinge a me le chiome ; io son felice alfin !
Peace has come again to my soul and I can at last be happy !

Promesse de mon avenir,
O casto fior del mio sospir,
Oh, promise of my future—

O Sitâ, rêve de ma vie,
O raggio d'or de' sogni miei,
Sita—dream of my life—

O beauté qui me fus ravie,
Chi al labbro mio, se mia tu sei,
Beauty stolen from me—

Enfin tu vas m'appartenir ! O Sitâ !
Chi il bacio tuo mi può rapir ? O Nair !
At last you're going to be mine ! Oh Sita !

Viens charmer mon cœur amoureux,
Imparadisa il mio dolor,
Come and charm my loving heart,

Viens sourire aux splendeurs du monde,
Ogni tuo vel, o mia Nair,
Come and smile on the splendours of the world,

Viens charmer mon cœur amoureux.
Dischinga a te per me l'amor !

O Sitâ, viens, je t'attends, je t'aime. Ma main te garde un
diadème.
Ah, a queste braccia or t'abbandona ! A te serbata ho una
corona.
*Oh Sita, come, I wait for you, I love you. For you I am holding
a crown.*

O Sitâ, viens, je t'attends ; o Sitâ, viens, je t'attends !
O Nair muta restar non puoi s'io chiamo, o Nair !
Oh Sita, come, I wait for you ; Oh Sita, come, I wait for you !

Je t'aime ! Sitâ, tu seras reine ! Ah !
Ah, vieni ! Ah vien ; t'attendo, io t'amo ! Ah !
I love you ! Sita, you will be queen ! Ah !

Viens charmer mon cœur amoureux,
O casta fior del mio sospir,

Vien sourire aux splendeurs du monde ;
Imparadisa il mio dolor,

O Sitâ, rêve de ma vie,
Ogni tuo vel, o mia Nair,

Viens charmer mon cœur amoureux.
Dischinga a te per me l'amor !

Viens, Sitâ ! O viens !
Vien, Nair ! Ah, vien !

LA PARTIDA (The departure)

Poem by E. Blasco.

Music by F. M. Alvarez.

Caruso, H.M.V., D.B. 639, 12in., d.s., red.
Galli-Curci, H.M.V., D.B. 265, 12in., d.s., red.
De Gogorza, H.M.V., D.B. 186, 12in., d.s., red.

Sierras de Granada, montes de Aragon,
Sierras of Granada, mountains of Aragon,
Campos de mi patria, para siempre adios, adios,
My native fields, farewell, farewell for ever.

Para siempre adios.

*De la patria los ultimos ecos, los ultimos ecos
The last sounds, the last sounds of my homeland
Resonando en mi pecho estaran, en mi pecho estaran ;
Will remain echoing in my breast, in my breast ;

Y mis ojos llorando pesares, llorando pesares,
And my eyes, weeping with sorrow, weeping with sorrow,
Sus dolores ; ay ! sus dolores al mundo diran.*
Will tell their sadness, alas, their sadness to the world.

†A destierro y ausencia constante, y ausencia constante,
To exile, to long banishment, to long banishment

Me condenan tiranos de amor, tiranos de amor,
I am condemned by love's tyrants, by love's tyrants,

Unos ojos del alma enemigos, del alma enemigos,
By somebody's cold and hostile eyes,

Mensageros ; ay ! mensageros de un pecho traidor, † ; ah !
The messengers, alas, messengers of a faithless heart. Ah !

Cuando a tus playas vuelva, suelo adorado,
Beloved land, when I come back to your shores,

Las aguas del olvido me habran curado ;
Perhaps the waters of oblivion will have cured me ;

Y si asi no sucede ! triste de mi, triste de mi !
But if that is not so then woe is me, woe is me !

A la patria que dejo vendré a morir, vendré a morir.
To the homeland I'm leaving I shall come back to die, to die.

Sierras de Granada . . . etc., as before.

* . . . * Cut by de Gogorza.

† . . . † Cut by Galli-Curci.

WORDS WANTED BY READERS

These queries are inserted with the idea that readers will help one another. Town readers, please note that the local library may often afford the information they seek. Readers in general, please note that the singing English versions of most popular operas can be cheaply purchased through a music dealer or from Ricordi's, Chappell's, etc.

- (1) Italian and English words of Caruso's "Addio a Napoli," "Canta pe' me," "Cor 'ngrata," "Mamma mia che vo' sape," "Perchè," "Pimpinella," "Santa Lucia," and "Vieni sul mar."—F. Usher, 79, Villa Road, Oldham.
[For "Addio a Napoli" and "Perchè," see Vol. 1, pp. 250-251.]
- (2) English words of "Sabbath morning at sea" (Elgar), "Morning hymn" (Henschel), "Hark, the echoing air" (Purcell), "Fill a glass with golden wine" (Quilter), "Harvest of Sorrow" (Rachmaninoff), Siegmund sees the sword hilt and Siegmund draws out the sword (H.M.V. D.678-9), Solveig's song (Voc. D.02070) and "Ave Maria" (Schubert) ; Italian words and translation of "Serenata" (Bracco), "Voi lo sapete," "Addio Mignon" ; Latin words and translation of "Esultatè Deo," "Laudate Dominum," "Ave Maria," and "Innocentes" (Vatican Choir) ; German words and translation of "Ich liebe dich" (Grieg), "Der Musensohn" (Schubert), and "Auf dem Wasser" (Schubert) ; French words and translation of "Belle nuit, O nuit d'amour" (Offenbach) and "Pour un baiser" (Tosti).—J. Robertson, 126, Darnley Road, Gravesend.
- (3) Spanish and English words of "A Granada," "El relicario," "El guitarrico," "La paloma," "Teresita mia" ; French and English of "La Sevillana."—E. Given, Colville Terrace, Crossgates, Fife.
[For "La paloma," see vol. 2, page 213 ; for "A Granada," see vol. 2, page 257.]

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PAUVRE MARTYR OBSCUR

(Patrie—Paladilhe.)

Ruffo, H.M.V., D.B.401, 12in., d.s., red.

Pauvre martyr obscur, humble héros d'une heure,
Poor, lowly martyr, the humble hero of an hour,

Je te salue et je te pleure !
I salute you and mourn for you !

La légende apprendra ton nom à nos enfants ;
Our children will learn your name in story ;

Ils garderont toujours ta mémoire bénie !
They will always keep your memory sacred !

Tu revivras, o toi qui nous donne ta vie,
You, who gave your life for us, will live in history

Parmi les plus vaillants et les plus triomphants !
Among the most valiant and the most triumphant !

Tu revivras, o toi qui nous donne ta vie !

Ce n'est pas de tomber dans la lutte acharnée
It is not falling in desperate strife

Qui fait grande une destinée ;
That ennobles a career,

C'est de mourir fidèle au devoir accepté
But dying in the faithful discharge of duty,

C'est d'accomplir dans l'ombre un noble sacrifice,
Unobtrusively making a noble sacrifice,

D'aller au but certain sans que l'âme faiblisse,
Marching to a fixed goal with spirit undaunted,

Et de n'attendre rien de la postérité.
Expecting nothing from posterity.

C'est d'accomplir dans l'ombre un noble sacrifice.

LA VILLANELLE

(Eva dell'Acqua.)

Galli-Curci, H.M.V., D.B.262, 12in., d.s., red.

Hempel, H.M.V., D.B.297, 12in., d.s., red.

J'ai vu passer l'hirondelle dans le ciel pur du matin.
I have seen the swallow go by in the clear morning sky.

Elle allait à tire-d'aile vers le pays où l'appelle,
Like a flash she flew past, towards the land to which she is called,

Vers le pays où l'appelle le soleil et le jasmin.
To which she is called by the sun and the jasmine.

J'ai vu passer l'hirondelle !

J'ai longtemps suivi des yeux le vol de la voyageuse.
For a long time my eyes followed the traveller's flight.

Depuis, mon âme rêveuse
Since then, in a dream, my soul

L'accompagne par les cieux. Ah !, Ah !,
Has been accompanying her through the skies, Ah !, Ah !,

Au pays mystérieux. Ah !
To that mysterious land. Ah !

Et j'aurais voulu comme elle suivre le même chemin. Ah !
And I wish that I could, likewise, have followed the same route. Ah !

J'ai vu passer l'hirondelle, elle allait à tire-d'aile ;

J'ai vu passer l'hirondelle dans le ciel pur du matin.

Elle allait à tire-d'aile vers le pays où l'appelle,

Vers le pays où l'appelle le soleil et le jasmin.

J'ai vu l'hirondelle, j'ai vu l'hirondelle,

L'hirondelle, l'hirondelle !

AVE MARIA

(Gounod, P. Kahn, etc.)

Bronskaja, Col., A.5193, 12in., d.s., l. blue.

Caruso, H.M.V., D.K.103, 12in., d.s., buff.

Chamlee, Brunswick, 50021, 12in., d.s., gold.

Destinn, H.M.V., D.B.647, 12in., d.s., red.

Gluck, H.M.V., D.B.574, 12in., d.s., red.

McCormack, H.M.V., D.B.577, 12in., d.s., red. Etc.

The Latin words of the "Ave Maria" and their English translation are as follows :—

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee, blessed art Thou
 mulieribus et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesu. Sancta
among women and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus.
 Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus, nunc et in hora
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and in
 mortis nostræ.
the hour of our death.

Amen.

There are many settings of this prayer, of which those by Gounod and Percy Kahn have been frequently recorded for the gramophone.

In Gounod's setting the words "Mater Dei" are omitted and there are one or two repeats, quite easy to follow. The repeats are numerous in Percy Kahn's arrangement, which is as follows :—

Ave Maria, gratia plena, Ave Maria, gratia plena.
 Dominus tecum, benedicta tu in mulieribus,
 Et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesu, Jesu.
 Ave Maria, gratia plena. Ave Maria, gratia plena.
 Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis, nobis peccatoribus,
 Nunc et in hora mortis nostræ ;
 Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis, ora pro nobis.
 Amen, Amen.

MARIA, MARI !

Words by Vincenzo Russo. Music by Eduardo di Capua.

Titta Ruffo, H.M.V., D.A.353, 10in., d.s., red (one verse).

Scotti, H.M.V., D.B.422, 12in., d.s., red (two verses).

Smirnov, H.M.V., D.A.463, 10in., d.s., red (one verse).

Aràpete fenesta ! Famm' affaccià a Maria !

Ah, open, little window ! Oh, let me see my Marie !

Ca stongo mmiez' 'a via speruto p' 'a vedè !

Here, in the street I'm waiting ; her face I long to see !

Nun trovo n'ora 'e pace ; 'a nott' 'a faccio iourno,

I find no peace of mind now ; night and day are the same to me.

Sempe pe sta ccà attuorno, speranno 'e ce parlà.

Here I am always waiting, hoping with her to speak.

Ah, Maria, Mari ! Quanta suonno ca perdo pe' te !

Oh Marie, oh Marie ! Oh how much sleep I'm losing, all through you !

Famm' addurmi abbracciato nu poco cu te !

Oh, let me sleep heart to heart for a moment with you !

Ah, Maria, Mari ! Quanta suonno ca perdo po' te !

Famm' addurmi, oi Maria, oi Mari !

Mmiez' a stu ciardeniello nce ride 'a malvarosa,

Within this pretty garden where hollyhocks are smiling,

Nu lietto 'e fronn' 'e rose aggu fatto pe' te.

See, dear, the bed of rose leaves that I have made for you !

Viene ch' 'a notte è ddoce, 'o cielo ch'ò nu manto ;

Come, for the night is lovely, Heaven has spread her starry veil ;

Tu duorme e i' te canto 'a nonna affianco a te !

Sleep, dear, while I, beside you, sing you a lullaby !

Ah, Maria, Mari ! etc . . .

Pare ca già s'arape na senga 'o fenestella,

It seems now that the window is opening a little way ;

Maria c' 'a manella nu segno a me me fa !

Yes, there is Marie waving her tiny hand to me !


Sona, chitarra mia ! Maria s' è scetata,

Come, then, my guitar, play up ! Marie has now awakened,

Na bella serenata facimmela senti.

So let me hear you strumming a pretty serenade.

Ah, Maria, Mari ! etc . . .



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I'm fond of Swistle's Ness Milk.
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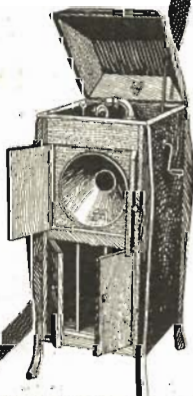
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